Digital Online Citizen Input

COMMUNITY VOICE OCTOBER 2016 - FEBRUARY 2017

Ideas and thoughts were shared online through our "Community Voice" forum. Residents could comment on ideas and vote them up or down.

• 27 IDEAS



- 8 Transportation Ideas
- 4 Health & Community Service Ideas
- · 3 Economic Opportunity Ideas
- · 3 Sustainability Ideas
- 2 Fiscal Responsibility Ideas
- 1 Public Safety Ideas
- 1 Leadership Idea
- 1 Exceptional Service Idea
- · 3 Miscellaneous ideas

• 20 COMMENTS ON IDEAS



- 62 VOTES PLACED
 - · 38 VOTES IN FAVOR OF IDEAS
 - 24 VOTES OPPOSING IDEAS

SCREENSHOT OF COMMUNITY VOICE FORUM





Question: Are we missing an issue that is important to you?

Our strategic goals are: Improve Transportation, Provide Public Safety, Enhance Economic Opportunities, Promote a Sustainable Environment and Build Healthy & Resilient Communities.





IDEA: Coordinated Traffic Signals

"It would be much more energy efficient if traffic flow were better managed and we didn't have to stop so often!! I think with today's technology we can do better!!"

Comment from Community Voice user

"Yes, absolutely. There are way too many poorly timed lights. If red light cameras can exist, it would seem that technology could be used to improve and control light change intervals. That's a higher level of consideration, I suppose, but surely re-timing the intervals at problem intersections can be done relatively inexpensively."





IDEA: Stop constructing traffic circle intersections

"Stop constructing traffic circle intersections in Lake County IL. This is not Europe. Leave the intersections as normal intersections. The circle intersections are not constructed properly, e.g., you cannot see across/through the intersection, and I personally think they are dangerous. Drivers are not using the circle intersections correctly, e.g., speeding, not giving the right of way if you are already proceeding in the traffic, plus more. Spend the funding on something else in Lake County like helping poor people, homelessness, drug addiction, etc. If the money cannot be used for the aforementioned things, use the funding for road and bridge repairs, potholes, etc. Thanks for listening to me."





IDEA: Better bus service to attract, keep and maintain local workers (and hence the local economy) in Lake County.

"Frankly, bus service for commuters and local workers who either do not drive, or don't have access to their cars is deplorable. There are long stretches of highway literally lined on either side with 'industrial parks' and corporate campuses that are almost completely inaccessible by bus. (For example, a long stretch of Delany starting at Sunset has many jobs lining the road, and NO bus service to get to them.) Not only should these potential jobs be made available to local workers by bus, they should also have marked, designated bus stops along these routes, so that commuters can get to their jobs reliably and not be taken an extra 2 or 3 miles down the road because the bus driver was either day dreaming, or unfamiliar with the route. (The fact many Pace bus drivers don't know their routes because they drive a different one almost every day is another issue, as is some drivers' surliness and rudeness). Our local economy can't possibly be helped by jobs that commuters can't get to."

Comment from Community Voice user

"By "marked and designated" I mean bus stops with REAL SIGNS so that even the driver can see that a stop (with jobs for local commuters) are all along his/her route, usually a long stretch of highway. The way it is right now, you either have to know the route as well, if not better than the driver, or NOT be brand new, interviewing, or looking for a job. It only takes a few seconds to miss a stop and have to walk a mile or two back along the shoulder of the highway. Also, you have to hope and pray that a bus goes down that road at all - many times, the bus service is non-existent, or only during morning and evening rush hours. Such is the case with the Pace Bus 625 (Lake Forest), a 'shuttle bug' of extremely limited service, which, paradoxically goes to an area of hundreds of jobs, most inaccessible to commuters. (This bus is scheduled to be discontinued, believe it or not, meaning no local commuters without car access will be able to go to these jobs.)"





IDEA: Right Turn Lanes

"When creating and redoing county roadway intersections adding right turn lanes to all newly constructed and renovated areas should be considered due to the growth in traffic over the last 30 years."





IDEA: Need for continuous 4-lane roads in Lake County

"Traffic congestion is one of the biggest problems in Lake County. It's a legitimate quality-of-life issue. How did Lake County grow the way it did without more foresight into developing a better transportation infrastructure? The decades-long debate about Rt. 53 is one thing, what about East-West roads? I believe Lake is the only collar county to have zero continuous four lane E-W roads. Sadly, it seems too late now, how can things be improved? They are desperately needed! Stop building more housing and retail developments along already too crowded corridors without addressing traffic problems. Mainly, Rt. 22 and Rt. 176 should be 4 lanes from one end to the other. Yes, this would be a major undertaking. But it should have happened a long time ago. I wish I had a brilliant idea to solve the problem quickly and inexpensively. I don't. But the problem is only going to get worse. Finding a solution has to start somewhere."



"I wish whoever voted down on this would have given some explanation. It's quite perplexing that someone doesn't think inadequate road infrastructure is a problem in Lake County."





IDEA: Route 60

"As many people know, Lake County is growing. Route 60 needs to be widened. Are there any plans in the future to widen this road?"

Comment from Lake County

"Thank you for your input. Comments will be shared with the Lake County Board. Currently, there are no immediate plans to widen IL Route 60 (which is a State Road, and not one maintained by Lake County DOT). The Lake County 2040 Transportation Plan available on our website provides an overview of the recommended improvements necessary to address the future transportation needs of Lake County. intersections."

Comment from Community Voice user

"Rt. 60 is already 3 lanes in Vernon Hills, but it's slow because of all of the curb cuts and lights for the mall. Widening roads usually just leads to more traffic, and congestion, especially at intersections. And more air pollution. Instead, we should think about mass transit for high volume destinations."

Comment from Community Voice user

"Evan you obviously never drive route 60 North of Vernon Hills. It's only two lanes and is nothing but stopped traffic. It's the changing of times. More people live out that way so there needs to be infrastructure to support it. Widening roads doesn't lead to more traffic or congestion at intersections, it leads to an improved traffic flow, easier access and less stress to the people who drive it every day. There would be less accidents also. You stick to your mass transit idea. Sounds like it works for you."





IDEA: Community Garden for Waukegan

"The city of Waukegan desperately is in need of a community garden. This is the kind of garden where residents obtain a plot of ground to grow a garden. These gardens have many benefits to the community including very positive social benefits. There needs to be parking and water and good soil for such a site. I've been trying to get the Waukegan Park District to implement such a garden but without results. For a model please see the Wagner Farm in Glenview."

Comment from Community Voice user

"The benefits of this kind of a community garden are many. They create community, connecting people with one another, the land, nature their community, and their food. They are educational for children and adults alike. Many studies have found they make the neighborhoods they are in safer. They improve participants health by improving diet and exercise. I manage a one acre community garden in Round Lake. The gardeners produce thousands of pounds of organically grown healthy food. We've even had gardeners travel from as far away as Waukegan to get plots in our garden. At peak harvest time some of the gardeners set up a small market to sell their excess to the local community. Community gardens are an essential part of making cities and towns more sustainable and aesthetic."





IDEA: Protect Our Communities from Hazards Associated With Crude-by Rail-Transport

"1. File comments opposing any related docs and/or permit apps 2. Submit copy of Res to Gov Rauner, whereby County requests he a. Take exec action directing state agencies to conduct comp review of related safety procedures & emergency response preparedness b. Order cumulative impact anlys of health & safety hazards 3. Address impacts to public health & sfty, property, air quality, and surface & groundwater 4. Submit letter to rail carriers requesting they a.make public any plans for new or expanded facilities or sgfnt rail traffic vol increases b.provide reps to meet periodically with citizen groups and gov officials c.update rail carriers' emgcy response plan with County to account for transport & potential emgcs d.conduct environ monitoring including but not limited to groundwtr & air; submit environ monitoring or testing info to local gov entities on mo basis for 10 yrs 5. Work through County officials and related avenues to share Res with other counties along corridors & support their efforts."





IDEA: Oppose Initiatives to Expand Commuter Rail and Freight Capacity

"This has not been announced, but if discussion takes place regarding this topic, residents need transparent information stating that increasing commuter and freight rail capacity will:

1. increase number of trains rolling through our communities. 2. increase wear & tear on turn of the century railroads. 3. increase risk of derailments, spills, and fiery explosions of tank cars filled with highly toxic and explosive crude oil. 4. increase negative health impacts including, but not limited to, internal organ failure, cancer, blood disorders, birth defects, and genetic mutations. 5. allow rail companies access to public revenue to fund privately-owned infrastructure"





IDEA: Focus on Education

"Of all the services, facilities, and opportunities available, education is the single most critical to our future. I realize this is not a "County" service, but facilitating and coordinating opportunities could be. Bringing the various resources together and facilitating new ones is within the County's reach. Make County-wide 100% HS graduation a target - and increase the focus on the University Center at CLC would be great first steps. Maybe even add college opportunities in-County. I can't tell you how to do it - I can only note its importance to our County's future. Our ability to attract and retain high-end employers is highly dependent upon our work-force capability. This focus would further that long term goal. Thanks for listening."



"Good idea, there needs to be some focus on more vocational-type schooling. There are a lot of hands-on kids that would do wonderfully in the trades. I saw an ad looking for a welder and the pay was fantastic- with benefits! Mechanics are in high demand as well. There is too much of a push for 4-year degrees, and not enough push for the other wonderful jobs out there that don't require a 4-year degree."

MISCELLANEOUS/ OTHER



IDEA: Better access to Forest Preserve property by the public

"We have beautiful Forest Preserve properties that are under used or not accessible to the general public. There seems to be an elitist group that has access. Let's look at better ways to create more access and promote tourism utilizing this wonderful resource."

Comment from Community Voice user

"I use the forest preserves on a weekly basis and have no problem entering them or exiting. To the best of my knowledge all of them have access from sunup to sundown. Most of them have great parking lots and walking trails. Joel, which forest preserve properties have you had problems entering?"

Comment from Community Voice user

"Many are accessible only by road, and that usually means by car. Rail goes past many Forest Preseves, so a METRA stop for those could be great."

MISCELLANEOUS/ OTHER



IDEA: Clean up the abuse of power and the corruption in Lake County

"All of the wrongful convictions and apparent lack of concern from the State's Attorney's office, plus the ridiculous investigation and prosecution of Dr. Thomas Rudd. Something needs to be done. This is out of control. Lake County is wasting millions of our hard earned tax dollars, which could be much better spent in many other areas. Instead of focusing on a Senate Bill that might save the county \$250,000 why not clean up the State's Attorney's Office and the Sheriff's Department so that we don't have to pay millions of dollars wrongfully convicting people, fighting appeals and then paying them restitution."

Question: How should the County cut costs/increase revenues?

The uncertainty of the State budget and potential State funding cuts continue to place significant pressure on our budget. What are your ideas to make cuts or increase revenues to fund your top priorities?





IDEA: Bicycle lanes in Lake County

"If people bike more, all the costs that come with cars will be reduced. ex. snow removal, road ware, police duties, environmental costs, etc. Good luck encouraging people to bicycle to work. Bicycling is a life style. You eat better. You conserve water when you shower. You recycle. You cut costs in every way you can. You start to garden. You become more active. You participate more. All these little life style choices contribute to the whole. If more people were educated on these life style ways, things would be better. Look at other communities that have recreational lifestyles. Think Colorado, Boise and Amsterdam. Look at their productivity and life style habits."





IDEA: Restrict or Eliminate Corporate Tax Incentives

"If corporate tax incentives are offered, the County should only offer those based on local sales tax revenue generated. They should not consist of property taxes, funding moving expenses, paying for the training of new hires, and etc. - all of which have been offered in Lake County. Increased emphasis should be placed on supporting small business, entrepreneurship, apprenticeships, and specialty trades. Business in Lake County should vary in some way from village to village, each having its own distinct and unique specialty, or signature; thereby, attracting additional targeted consumers from outside Lake County."





IDEA: Stop taxing property as if it's a bottomless pit of money. You're driving people out of Lake County. Taxes should be income based.

"Property tax is a discriminatory tax, it taxes people because they own something. Not because of income or buying something. It does not take in what they make for a living or if they have lost their job. Money that could go to fixing up a house or starting a business goes to the county who does not understand other peoples budgets. The county just make the taxes fit their budget by changing the numbers. People that buy something can choose if they can afford it at the time they buy it. But with property tax it's a never ending bill from the county no matter what your income is or was. It's pay at all cost or get out of something you have owned for 20 or 30 years. It keeps poor people from moving up because even if they save money to buy in a better area the taxes will stop them from moving up. The county budget should not force people out of the house they paid for."

Comment from Community Voice user

"Property tax is also grossly unfair to single person homes. They pay the same amount as a married family, often with two or more incomes. Retired people should not have to pay school taxes."

Comment from Community Voice user

"Taxes becoming "income based" is basically punishing people who are successful. This country (county) should bring people up, not the other way around."





IDEA: By eliminating the extraordinary waste within county government. "Check all the departments to determine where the waste is."

Question: Share your ideas to advance Lake County's mission.

Our mission is to promote and sustain a safe, healthy, vibrant and environmentally responsible county and deliver efficient and high quality public services, all while maintaining our strong financial position. What are your ideas to advance this mission?





IDEA: Preserve Farmland, Promote Organic Farming and Local Foods

"The preservation of farmland should be a County priority and added to the strategic plan. It should also be included in the forest preserve's mission statement. Farmland is an irreplaceable resource with which we've been blessed. We need to be good stewards of this resource - food is a basic necessity. Local and organic foods are in demand."





IDEA: Directors should be experienced in the field they work

"In the health department the head of the organization has no health related background. He is a businessman and has no idea about health care. Hire someone who has knowledge of the medical field. I imagine this problem exists in many departments throughout the county."





IDEA: Make use of golf courses during winter months

"Would it be possible to convert golf courses to cross country skiing routes and training facilities during the winter months?"

Question: Values guide what we do. Tell us what you think.

Our Values: Fiscal responsibility (balanced budget, AAA financial rating); transparency, honesty, reliability and accountability; cost-effective, efficient and high quality services; leadership and collaboration, and environmental stewardship





IDEA: People are not getting the health care they need.

"Recently changes occurred in the immunization program and many children are no longer eligible to receive school required vaccines and there seems to be no other places to get these vaccines."





IDEA: Community Connection

"I would like to see some leadership and focus on encouraging citizens to connect to their communities and each other. Initiatives to help all in our diverse county realize that we are "more alike...than unalike;" that we all have something to offer one another; that we are better off together than separate."

Question: What are your ideas to accomplish our goals?

The strategies and actions under each of the goals show the steps we are taking to advance our plan. What other ideas do you have? Read the details under each goal by clicking the link at the top of the page.





IDEA: Focus on crime deterrence to improve safety

"The County's public safety goals focus on services after crimes occur: expanding Depke, building up courthouse infrastructure, body cameras. More focus on crime prevention would have a positive impact on quality of life, health, and financial bottom line."

Question: What is your vision for Lake County?

Share your ideas on how to achieve your vision for the future. We envision Lake County as a leader in developing a thriving local economy, healthy natural environment, safe and livable communities, healthy residents, and innovative public services.





IDEA: More outdoor trails and preserves

"Lots of Lake County residents help the LCFP, IDNR, Conserve Lake County, etc. Their volunteer work is an example for us all. Having the funding to expand their work is vital to the preservation of Lake County. By preserving out prairies and forest now future generations will be able to continue the tradition much more easily. Please support the environment here in Lake County in all possible ways."



"We have enough prairies and forests already! We need to follow WI governors example and sell off some of this land and lay off all the people to maintain it all. Our taxes are too high!!"

Comment from Community Voice user

"As population continues to grow, our forest preserves will be increasingly burdened to provide for us all. Land prices are still low, as are interest rates. This is the time to take advantage of an economic softening to acquire more land for the fp, not sell it off!"





IDEA: Open leaf burning in residential neighborhoods

"My vision for Lake County is to not only have the most beautiful county, but the most healthy! Residential leaf burning releases the toxins from the leaves, that was absorbed by the trees in exchange for giving us oxygen. The smoldering smoke traps below the tree line and allows said smoke to enter into homes, even with windows closed. Many residents leave their homes and the neighborhoods because they cannot breathe.....especially those with respiratory diseases. This smoke can be deadly for adults and children with respiratory issues. We need to set up leaf collection, or have residents use our yard waste choices that are offered. Some intent on burning do not care that their neighbors can have respiratory distress or even die from this smoke. Because people are insensitive to the dangers, we have to have laws. We need to protect our most vulnerable that live in our residential areas."

☐ Comment from Community Voice user

"Some may not agree, I see. They must not have had a family member or neighbor die from respiratory distress which can be caused by toxic smoke. I am advocating the use of other leaf removal options instead of burning. No one.....no one, should have to leave their home to find relief to breathe. There are more people out there than others realize. Respiratory distress is on the rise. We should ALL be willing to help family and friends and neighbors to breathe easier. It is something we all can do, with very little impact to ourselves."



IDEA: We were promised 40 years ago that route 120 would be 4 lanes, also, route 45 and route 83, and also waiting for route 53 to come north.

"My vision for lake county is to have roads that are 4 lane. Why should we have to wait 3 miles back for a stop light at route 120, 45 or 83. We were promised these roads would be 4 lanes over 40 years ago. Lake County has more single lane roads than other counties. Why was Rollins rd widened and Hunt club road, while the rest of us wait for hours a day to just navigate lake county. When you mention this to other people outside of our county, they cannot believe this. Help create these construction sites."



IDEA: Business!

"First of all, lets take Newport Township as an example. There is plenty of space for business, however the area lacks sewer and water. There are hardly any taxing bodies in the area, putting a huge burden on the residents. Look into expanding sewer and water, and it will pay for itself in a matter of years. Second, WE NEED MORE BUSINESS! Make this county small business-friendly. Quit treating the current ones as the "deep pockets" to pick from. Offer incentives to start up a business. Finally, enough with the forest preserve buying up everything. I love the trails, and use them, but enough is enough. Back to Newport Township, whatever available commercial area is being eaten up by the Forest Preserve. I work at a company that is feet from WI, and they fight the temptation to relocate the company to that state."

Comment from Community Voice user

"Well, I live in Newport Township and I couldn't disagree with you more. The people touting sewer, water and development as the answer to everything haven't done their homework. With more development comes more people, more traffic, more kids in the schools, more need for services -- not to mention the cost of installing sewer and water in the first place. We went through this kind of building boom in the county in the 1980 - 90s and the resultant tax increases eventually cost Bob Depke, Bob Neal and others their jobs. Let's be creative in our development planning."

Comment from Community Voice user

"What's your suggestion to lower the increasing taxes, due to lack of business (ultimately due to lack of sewer & water-in part)? We have more traffic, like it or not, and more people. We aren't growing in response, in fact, the only thing growing is the tax bill. I ask again, what do you suggest?"

Comment from Community Voice user

"Well, first is be careful how you spend. The Village of Wadsworth recently increased the sales tax ostensibly to pay for road improvements. But now they're getting prices for a gazebo, and extending Caroline Ave to reach the gazebo - on and on. Gazebos are nice, but not if budgets are tight. The township board just increased pay significantly for some (not all) elected officials. And then look at where the tax increases are coming from -- and start looking for cuts there. If these elected bodies have a tendency to spend, spend, spend giving them more tax dollars won't solve the problem."

□ Comment from Community Voice user

"I do agree that the county as a whole needs to be more transparent as to how they are spending. As far as Wadsworth goes, I don't know the ins/outs of the town, but I do know they lack overall business hence the tax increases. I also know they pay higher taxes to support Zion schools, and the forest preserves. I also agree that being a business-friendly county would help."

EMAIL & SOCIAL MEDIA COMMENTS

OCTOBER 2016 - FEBRUARY 2017

EMAIL

TOPIC: CONSOLIDATION

"Get rid of the really, not needed-8000 taxing bodles, that over lap each other, and since we can't outlaw guns, outlaw the bullets needed for them!"

TOPIC: REDUCE TAXES/CONSOLIDATION

"Taxes in this county are driving people away. Work with other taxing bodies on a tax reduction plan that reduces the size of government, cancels unnecessary buildings like our new courthouse serving a shrinking caseload, and downsizing intrusive bureaucracies. If we don't act now, the high tax burden will continue to shrink this great County."

TOPIC: PROPERTY TAXES

"I read the strategic plan and although the ideas look interesting, I do not believe that fiscal restraint is being applied. Our real estate taxes are some of the highest in the United States..in a dead heat with New Jersey. My wife and I over a 50 year marriage have lived in many states including Indiana, Ohio, Florida, Missouri, California, and the life style, safety, and other attributes of residency are not significant or demonstrably better than the other States we have lived, in my opinion. The taxpayers are strapped with very high real estate taxes, State income taxes, and sales taxes...and the State is dead broke. I would suggest that our Lake County government take the first step and "start over"...the 2017 Budget is unrealistic for the taxpayers and therefore if the Strategic Plan is the basis for the 2017 Budget...it is Unrealistic. Think about it! In simple terms, I look at myself as a normal person living in Lake County and accordingly I need an automobile to get from Point A" to Point "B". To do that I obviously need to but a Maserati. Any person can devise a "strategic plan" that demands a Maserati. Sounds stupid?"

TOPIC: PROPERTY TAXES

"The most economic, logical, and equitable solution to our never-ending property tax escalations is to assess parents per child. Realizing full well the opposition to this suggestion, nevertheless, this is one sure way of reversing our educational funding crisis. When parents register their child/children for kindergarten, Lake County would automatically increase their property taxes, per their "child burden." A more palatable compromise for parents, but perhaps less so for singles would allow one-child families to incur no increase in property taxes. This funding method would greatly help the solvency of school districts—as would critically examining teachers' pay/pensions—and perhaps cause parents to become truly responsible for the number of children they have."

TOPIC: TRANSPORTATION/BIKE PATH

"How about a Bike Path from the college of Lake County to prairie crossing subdivision down Route 45. So kids can ride their bikes to school and also patronize the businesses at the strip malls."

TOPIC: TRANSPORTATION/OPPOSITION TO RT 53

"The Rt 53 extension should be removed from the strategic plan. All of the environmental groups that had supported the BRAC have removed their support. Long Grove, Hawthorn Woods, and Mundelein have voted against the extension or against the EIS. Lake County Board Chair Aaron Lawlor has withdrawn his support. Lake County citizens overwhelming are against this extension when they find out about all of the tax increases and tolls to build this very expensive road, the loss of open lands, and all of the development planned along the corridor which will increase congestion. There is no consensus to build this road. It is time to decommission the corridor and start planing on reasonable improvements to existing roadways to help alleviate congestion. Also mass transit needs improvement to help reduce traffic congestion."

TRANSPORTATION: CAPACITY

"I am responding to an email I received for community input for Lake County Strategic Plan. I live east of Greenbay Road in Zion, and have noticed road improvements throughout Lake County the past Decade to increase better traffic flow. I don't understand Lake County when I drive on Greenbay Rd. north of Sunset Ave. where Greenbay Rd. converts from a 4 lane Rd. to a two lane Rd. and then when I get to Wisconsin it becomes a six lane Rd. It doesn't seem right to me that Wisc. had enough foresight to widen Greenbay Rd. but Lake County has failed us. This is heavily traveled Rd. that needs to be widened. It seems to me we who live east of Greenbay Rd. have been forgotten by our Lake County officials."

TRANSPORTATION: SIDEWALKS

"I work in a hospital and can't get to a phone for tonight's meetings. I would like to make a request via email, please. Can we discuss wider sidewalks along Butterfield Road between Rt 176 and Rt 137, both on the East and West sides of the street? I know there will be discussion on what to build on the property just south of the golf course, but regardless of what the final decision is, the sidewalk is far too narrow and unsafe for pedestrians. Traffic is too heavy and fast for the tiny area provided for pedestrian use. Additionally a traffic signal would be most helpful somewhere along that roadway. Thank you for taking my questions. I hope to be able to participate in the next meeting."

FACEBOOK

TOPIC: TRANSPORTATION/ROUTE 53

"How about building Rt. 53 to bring much needed businesses to reduce property taxes. Why is it we have some of the highest property taxes in the state but some of the lowest paid teachers, firefighters, paramedics, and police? Why does all the south, southwest, and western counties around Chicago all have five major expressways each? We have one, at the Eastern most section. Western and Northern Lake County have squat. We need much needed shopping centers, movie theaters. We need revenue."

TOPIC: MISCELLANEOUS/NON-COUNTY

"A Healthy & Safe Police Dept in each Town, Village & City. Also a Happy and Safe Fire Dept in each Town. Reinforce Safety and Support for our First Responders! Add to their Safety! Support Knollwood Fire Dept!"