



GOAL: 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.*

Workforce Ecosystem: A concept used to describe the partnership between local workforce stakeholders such as the Lake County Workforce Development Department, the College of Lake County and Lake County Partners, who work together to ensure that local businesses have ready access to the talent that they need to thrive. Stakeholder organizations/individuals that also play a role in the Workforce Ecosystem: Workforce Investment Board, elected officials, Chicago Metropolitan Agency for Planning (CMAP), Metra, Pace Suburban Bus, Chambers of Commerce, Illinois Tollway Authority, Illinois and Lake County Divisions of Transportation, Municipalities, School Districts, etc.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Targeted Industries: Medical Instruments, Health Care, Bio Pharma, Professional/ Technology Services, Entrepreneurial Development and Arts/Entertainment/Culture

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

- Action A:** Support targeted business outreach strategies to efficiently connect employers in key industries thereby enabling them to tap into training and continuing education programs and access a reliable pipeline of new talent.
- Action B:** Utilize business intelligence and market research to enhance and align workforce development strategies with projected local industry job growth and share this information with local stakeholders.
- Action C:** Engage all stakeholders including organizations, educational institutions and public bodies in the Workforce Ecosystem and ensure that they are effectively aligned to cooperatively serve the business community.
- Action D:** Ensure retention and foster growth of the county's private employers to harness Lake County's human capital potential.
- Action E:** Understand and meet the needs of emerging demographic groups, such as young professionals by continuing to make significant investments in the Leadership Lake County initiative.
- Action F:** Align economic opportunities with county and municipal infrastructure investment strategies, and continue to invest in transportation projects each year to help sustain a high-quality of life and ensure continued economic development.

2 Strategy 2: Increase collaboration and cooperation with other units of local government to cultivate integrated economic development and redevelopment.

- Action A:** Work with target communities to encourage new and innovative development methods and offer assistance with data and information on retention and redevelopment opportunities.
- Action B:** Lead a countywide initiative to continuously evaluate and pursue a competitive incentives framework.
- Action C:** Support local and regional economic development through the use and analysis of data.
- Action D:** Engage and convene 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 E:** Focus on development and redevelopment opportunities that maximize the utilization of existing infrastructure.
- Action F:** Identify barriers to retention and redevelopment and assess the resources available for stimulating redevelopment.

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Strategy 3: Pursue a strategic 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: Work with Lake County Partners, the county's economic development organization, to ensure consistent and mutually reinforced messaging through communication outlets such as websites, newsletters, social media channels, reports, and meetings.

Action B: Build awareness of economic development initiatives and Workforce Ecosystem partnerships to inform businesses of the tools and resources available to assist with expansion, training, and talent needs.

Action C: Communicate success stories that address issues and trends gathered through business intelligence and illustrate effective outcomes of the Workforce Ecosystem partnerships.

Action D: Understand how the State of Illinois' decisions are specifically impacting our local economy, and develop communications strategies that seek to counteract business concerns by quantifying and emphasizing Lake County's many strengths.

Action E: Foster relationships with members of the media to drive the development of story angles and ideas that highlight important economic and workforce development activities, opportunities, topics, and news.

Action F: Collaborate with economic development entities and the Workforce Ecosystem to produce and promote high-caliber workshops, summits, and special events that encourage and enhance local economic opportunities and stimulate jobs.

Action G: Connect with stakeholders and leverage relationships with community leaders to align local economic development goals with available sites, including the retail industry, infrastructure needs and long-term viability.

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Strategy 4: Support economic development initiatives to attract visitors through a partnership with Visit Lake County.

Action A: Encourage pursuit of high potential markets to widen reach of visitors through utilization of advertising, social media marketing, website content and solicitation of meetings and events to generate new revenue for the County and its communities.

Action B: Support Visit Lake County's advocacy for destination enhancing product development and new signature events, like Lake County Restaurant Week.

Action C: Identify opportunities to collaborate with Lake County Partners on messaging and branding to attract and retain young professionals and millennial visitors through promotion of arts and culture, unique dining experiences, evening entertainment, and outdoor recreation.



Jeff Hollenstein
Lead Teacher- NCCHS Careers Pathway

"We realized what we were doing wasn't working. We weren't meeting the needs of our students and getting them ready for college and the careers of today and tomorrow. Our Careers Pathway program is helping students to be more engaged in their curriculum by giving it a career focus. We also looked at regional workforce needs, including healthcare, information technology, manufacturing and engineering, so we're preparing students for success and helping build a talent pipeline for Lake County's businesses."

PERFORMANCE METRIC

Business Engagement Rate: Percentage of targeted businesses in Lake County that Workforce Ecosystem partners have face-to-face interactions with each year.

