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# **ONE Wake Issue Platform and Power Strategy**

**v. 6/10/21**

**Prepared for ONE Wake  
Annual Meeting**

**June 10 2021**



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## Our political moment

Our political moment in Wake County is shaped by the convergence of three forces: corporate power, substantial federal stimulus, and the upcoming municipal elections.

Apple's announcement of their \$1 billion investment in a new Wake County RTP campus is only the most recent example of the extent to which big tech, real estate, and other corporate interests are reshaping our communities.

At the same time, the federal government is sending close to \$450 million to Wake County through the American Rescue Plan – a once in a lifetime stimulus.

These outside forces are substantial, but all this power still must flow through our municipal and county government.

This year, ONE Wake has the opportunity to organize and deliver our power to use the upcoming municipal elections as leverage to steer these massive corporate and federal investments to address the top priorities that we have identified in our communities.

## A note on this report

This report has been created to help support the decisionmaking process at ONE Wake's June 10 Annual Meeting. It is representative of the dozens of hours of volunteered by leaders working in research action teams this spring to shape our issue platform.

Ultimately, this report is a snapshot of our issues and our strategies in this moment, which will continue to evolve and take shape over the rest of the year.

Updated versions of this report will be posted on ONE Wake's website.



# Summary of ONE Wake Issue Platform (by geography)

## **Raleigh**

Designate City Land for Future Affordable Housing Development

Property Tax Abatement for Low Income Homeowners in  
Gentrifying Neighborhoods (emerging)

## **Cary**

Increase Local Funding for Affordable Housing

Congregation Owned Land for Affordable Housing

Continued Support for Resident-Led Organizing at Las Americas

## **Wendell**

County Land for Housing and Amenities in West Town

## **Wake Forest**

Preserving Affordable Housing through Resident Owned  
Communities

## **Countywide**

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## **Countywide**

Education Equity (emerging)



# Raleigh

## Designate City Owned Land for Affordable Housing

### **East Martin St Parking Lot**

The East Martin St Parking Lot is a 1.7 acre surface parking lot owned by the City of Raleigh. It is downtown, just east of Moore Square and two blocks from the GoRaleigh transit center. The zoning is for Downtown Mixed Use, minimum 10 stories.

### **Southhall Rd and Battle Bridge Rd**

Raleigh owns two large parcels outside the beltway off Southhall Rd to the Northeast, and Battle Bridge Rd in the Southeast. The parcels are 60 acres and 100+ acres respectively. Both are near existing bus routes. Our rough estimate is that the Battle Bridge Rd property alone could support over 700 housing units.



Location of City-Owned Land in Raleigh



# Raleigh

## Property Tax Abatement for Low Income Homeowners in Gentrifying Neighborhoods (emerging)

Property valuations and taxes are skyrocketing in Southeast Raleigh.

The increase in property taxes from the 2020 reappraisals disproportionately impacts neighborhoods where African American families were historically segregated. On average, property valuations increased by 20% countywide in 2020. However, in neighborhoods like College Park, land valuations have increased by 360%.

Broadly, homeowners and tenants in the historically African American neighborhoods of Southeast Raleigh that have been underserved by the city for decades are now being displaced by the impacts of developments like the recently approved Downtown South.

This trend will continue unless the City Council makes new investments to support low income homeowners, equivalent to or greater than the investments that they will make to private developers through the new Tax Increment Grant program.

# Cary

## Designate a penny of the property tax rate for affordable housing funding

The Town of Cary has no local funding for affordable housing development. Chapel Hill, Durham, and Raleigh have all designated a penny of the property tax rate for affordable housing, and each town has also recently passed a bond for affordable housing.

Comparable funding from the Town of Cary would be ~\$3 million per year from a penny for housing, and a \$28 million bond.



# Cary

## Support Development of Affordable Housing on Congregation-owned Land

Three ONE Wake churches in Cary are discerning the use of their campus for affordable housing development. One congregation has determined that their property could support 50 affordable rental units.

ONE Wake has two opportunities to support these efforts. The first is to organize large numbers of Cary residents to support each congregation in successfully rezoning their properties for affordable housing development.

The second is to create a local funding stream for affordable housing development (see above), and then to support each congregation as they apply for funding.

# Cary

## Continue supporting resident-led organizing at the Las Americas Mobile Home Park

ONE Wake remains committed to support the ongoing resident-led organizing at the Las Americas Mobile Home Park. The Las Americas neighborhood association is a dues paying member of ONE Wake.

For the last two years, residents have led an effort to address a number of substandard conditions and unfair treatment at the park, which is one of the last affordable communities in town.

Since our press conference in late March that was attended by 128 ONE Wake members, over 50% of residents who have requested copies of the titles to their mobile homes from the park owner have received or will soon receive the documents.



# Wendell

## County Land for Housing and Amenities in West Town

Wake County owns a 2.5 acre parcel of land in the West Town neighborhood of Wendell, a historically segregated African American community. In 2018 the County rated the land as suitable for affordable housing development but is prioritizing development of housing on other county owned parcels in Holly Springs and Cary.

African American residents in West Town have a long, successful history of organizing for public investment in their community, including a successful effort to bring water, sewer, and paved roads to their neighborhood in the 80s - early 90s.

Now leaders with the Eastern Ministers Alliance are shaping a local campaign to win county investment to develop affordable housing in the community, and/or to meet other community priorities as well.

# Wake Forest

## Preserving Affordable Housing through Resident Owned Communities

Wellington Park is a 47 unit mobile home park in Wake Forest. The current owner has received an offer from a regional developer who plans to redevelop the property into 275 single family homes.

If the park is sold all of the families at Wellington Park will be displaced. As many of the mobile homes are too old or too expensive to move, it is likely that most will lose their entire investment in their homes.

The sale is contingent on the rezoning of the property which goes to public hearing in July or August. If the rezoning is defeated, there is an opportunity to purchase the park and transform it into a resident owned cooperative.



# Countywide

## Overcoming Barriers to the Workforce Development Pipeline

WakeTech is the largest community college system in North Carolina and is a key section of the local workforce development pipeline. WakeTech's apprenticeship program and continuing education courses offer local residents with low wage jobs the opportunity to develop competitive skills in higher paying industries.

However, significant barriers remain that prevent low income residents from attending WakeTech courses. The largest barrier is the opportunity cost of attending courses in the first place. Many low income residents cannot afford to give up evenings that could be used to generate additional income through second jobs or gig work.

WakeTech has created a grant fund ("the Barrier Removal Program") to address this issue. However, the fund is far too small, and the existence of the fund is not well known to most in the outside community.

# Countywide

## Education Equity (emerging)

Over 30,000 students in the Wake County Public School System are "at risk" of not advancing to the next grade level.

Leaders of after school tutoring and enrichment programs are concerned about the impacts of the pandemic on existing inequities and pressures on families within the school system, including: housing insecurity, lack of access to technology, parents who are unable to supervise the virtual education of their students, unaddressed trauma and mental health concerns.

ONE Wake Education Team leaders have recently concluded a focused listening campaign on education and are currently researching how the organization can address one or more of the above concerns.



# Summer Power Building Strategy

- Sign up **10,000 voters** behind our platform for change in Wake County
  - Call the 5,000+ voters in our Empower database from last year's GOTV campaign
  - Expand our base through in-person canvassing to reach an additional 5,000 potential voters.
  - Test our platform and surface additional concerns for local action in our communities
  - Win commitments from voters and all Wake residents to turn out to our public actions in the fall, and to vote in the municipal elections
- Organize affordable housing bus tour with key decisionmakers roughly one month prior to our public actions in the fall (see timeline below)



# Core Team Leadership

One responsibility of membership with ONE Wake is to form a Core Team in your institution: a group of 5–15 leaders who broadly represent your institution, and who commit to work with ONE Wake organizing staff to:

1) reorganize your institution for a more relational culture; 2) lead your community into action; 3) connect your institution to ONE Wake.

All ONE Wake members are asked to nominate at least one formal leader of your Core Team to represent your institution at future leaders meetings.

## Strategy Team Nominations

This summer ONE Wake will formally elect a Strategy Team to replace the transitional Steering Team which helped guide our organization to our public launch on October 13, and through the crucial, immediate months after our launch.

The Strategy Team will serve as ONE Wake’s traditional corporate board, to develop the strategic organizing goals and plans, oversee fiscal responsibility, and evaluate personnel.

Core Teams from each ONE Wake member institution are asked to consider whether they want to nominate a leader to serve on ONE Wake’s Strategy Team. You can nominate a leader from your institution who is already serving on the Steering Team.

The deadline for nominations is our July 13 Internal Assembly (see timeline below). Nominations for the Strategy Team will be reviewed by a nominating committee, and a final Strategy Team slate will be proposed to the full ONE Wake membership for ratification at our September 14 Internal Assembly.

Qualifications for Strategy Team membership and more about the nominations process is available in our bylaws which are available for review on our website here: [www.onewake.org/bylaws](http://www.onewake.org/bylaws)

# Detailed Timeline w/ Goals



## Timeline with Goals

### June 10 Annual Meeting

Ratify strategy of creating 10,000 person voting block through relational canvassing campaign from June to August.

10 members from each institution committed to attend relational canvassing training

Campaign begins with relational phone calls to the 5,000+ voters in our Empower database

### July 13 Internal Assembly

Institutions report out their progress with relational phone calls.

Begin in-person neighborhood canvassing in communities where your institution has existing relationships

### August Bus Tour

Bus tour with key decisionmakers to call attention to the affordable housing crisis in Wake County and our solutions.

(more information will be available at July 13 Internal Assembly)

### September 14 Internal Assembly

Final reports from each institution on # of voter pledges collected through phone calls and in-person canvassing (goal: at least 200 pledges per institution)

Ratify agendas and turnout for public actions

### October Public Actions

Series of large, in-person public assemblies with decisionmakers to win commitments to support specific solutions developed by ONE Wake to address our issues above.

Decisionmakers include: Raleigh City Council, Cary Town Council, Wake Forest Town Commissioners, Wendell Town Council, Wake County Commissioners.

### November 18 Internal Assembly

Evaluation of fall actions, and ratification of spring strategy for delayed 2021 municipal elections.\*

*\*As of 6/10, it looks likely that Raleigh and Cary elections will be delayed to March 2022. Elections in other Wake municipalities that don't elect by districts appear to be proceeding on time.*



# Commitments from Member Institutions

- **Ratification of strategy to create 10,000 member voting block** to support our shared issue platform.
- **Deliver 10+ leaders from your institution to attend relational canvassing training** to learn how to conduct relational phone calls and neighborhood canvassing to build our voting block this summer.
  - Training offered on the following dates / times:
    - Tuesday, June 22, 7:00 PM
    - Thursday, June 24, 7:00 PM
    - Thursday, July 1, 7:00 PM
  - Registration is available online at [www.onewake.org](http://www.onewake.org)
- **Recruit pledges from at least 200 Wake County voters** to support our issue platform and to vote in the next municipal election. Deadline: August 31.
- **Ratify at least one Core Team leader to formally represent your institution at future leaders meetings**
- **Consider nominating a leader from your institution to serve on Strategy Team.** Deadline: July 13.