

ONE Wake 2026 Strategic Plan

Overview

The 2026 Strategic Plan marks a significant evolution in ONE Wake's organizing approach. This plan serves as the framework for our issue campaigns and action proposals throughout the year, with a strategic pivot that calls for increased leader activation and engagement across the organization.

Organizational Context

This year, ONE Wake transitioned from two full-time organizers and one part-time organizer to just one organizer. With this reduction in staff, we pivoted to focusing solely on our Homeownership to Equity Campaign. This strategic focus has allowed us to concentrate our resources and maximize impact on our core mission: building 1,000 affordable homes and 1,000 units of affordable apartments in Wake County.

Strategic Shift

This year's strategy represents a departure from previous years. We are proposing a pivot in which we ask our leaders to be more active within the organization, expanding their roles and deepening their engagement in ONE Wake's work across Wake County. This leader-led model will help us build capacity and sustain our work as we grow.

Three-Phase Approach

Phase 1: Spring (January - June)

Focus: Fundraising & Research

This foundational period centers on two critical priorities:

Fundraising Initiatives:

Our 2026 budget proposal aims to raise 55% of our income from our membership base and 45% from private foundations in the form of general operating support grants.

Individual Donation Goal: \$60,000 (up from \$50,000 in 2025)

- In 2025, ONE Wake raised \$47,000 from individual donors
- Metro IAF matched \$35,000 of that amount

- In 2026, Metro IAF will again match up to \$35,000 in recurring donations
- This funding will maintain current staffing and help hire a new organizer

Key Fundraising Activities:

- Follow up on unpaid institutional dues
- Build and activate money teams for donor outreach
- Establish recurring donation programs
- Identify and pursue grant opportunities

Research Team Development:

Organize and deploy research teams to collect data across four key areas:

1. Land Research Team

- Learn everything possible about the Randleigh Tract and development plans for that land
- Identify all government-owned land within Wake County
- Compile a list of church-owned land
- Research corporate-owned land in Wake County
- Identify ONE Wake leaders and members with land willing to support affordable housing development that generates revenue while providing humane housing

Campaign Context: ONE Wake has requested 100 acres from the over 400 acres on the Randleigh Tract owned by the City of Raleigh and Wake County. We've explained that the 100 acres doesn't need to be on one site—we're willing to work with multiple plots with the primary goal of building 2,000 units of affordable housing.

2. Internal Fundraising Research Team

- Maintain and increase individual donor contributions
- Identify and write grants for ONE Wake
- Develop innovative fundraising strategies
- Build phone banking capacity for donor outreach
- *Grant writers especially needed*

3. Municipalities Research Team

ONE Wake has primarily focused on Raleigh and Cary. To become a stronger organization, we need to broaden our base throughout Wake County municipalities. Elected officials for the County and City of Raleigh rightfully ask if we've reached out to other municipalities to help solve the problems we bring to them.

Research Focus:

- Politics in other municipalities that relate to our work

- Track current ONE Wake members in different municipalities
- Identify institutions in other municipalities that would be good fits for ONE Wake
- Build relationships with decision-makers in Knightdale, Fuquay-Varina, Wendell, Wake Forest, and other communities

4. Bond Referendum Research Team

During ONE Wake's July action, we asked the City of Raleigh to implement a new \$200 million bond for affordable housing. Five elected officials said "yes," while three said "no," explaining they needed research on how large a bond would likely receive voter approval.

Team Objectives:

- Gather data to help ONE Wake and the City of Raleigh understand why \$200 million for affordable housing should be on the ballot
- Research voter support and bond feasibility
- Prepare comprehensive data to present to elected officials

Strategic Objectives:

The data collected during this phase will enable us to:

- Build more power throughout multiple municipalities in Wake County
- Locate land and secure funds for affordable housing development
- Maximize effectiveness with elected officials across jurisdictions

Key Actions:

Spring actions will focus on budget processes in Cary, Raleigh, and Wake County, positioning ONE Wake to influence critical funding decisions.

Phase 2: Summer (June - August)

Focus: Strengthening Core Teams & Election Preparation

This period prioritizes internal organizational development and strategic positioning for the fall election season. Activities will include:

- Strengthening institutional core teams
- Leadership development and training
- Building infrastructure for fall campaign activities
- Preparing materials and strategies for candidate engagement

Decision Point:

At our internal assembly in May, we will ratify decisions that shape our summer plans for continued fundraising and fall election preparation.

Phase 3: Fall (September - December)

Focus: Large-Scale Non-Partisan Candidate Assembly

The fall period culminates in a major non-partisan assembly bringing together candidates for:

- Raleigh City Council
- Wake County Board of Commissioners

This assembly will serve as a platform for ONE Wake to demonstrate our collective power, engage candidates on our priorities, and secure commitments for affordable housing and community development.

Campaign Goal

Homeownership to Equity Campaign Target: Build 1,000 affordable homes and 1,000 affordable apartment units in Wake County, starting with our request for 100 acres from the Randleigh Tract.

Governance and Accountability

Strategy Team: The Strategy Team serves as the ONE Wake corporate board and as the executive committee to the Countywide Leaders Caucus, ONE Wake's primary decision-making body. The Strategy Team develops proposals for strategic organizing goals and plans, oversees fiscal responsibility, and evaluates personnel.

Countywide Leaders Caucus: Composed of every core team from our institutional membership base across 47 congregations, mosques, synagogues, non-profits, and neighborhood associations representing over 50,000 people in Wake County.

Moving Forward

This strategic plan positions ONE Wake to build sustainable power across Wake County, advance our Homeownership to Equity Campaign, and create lasting change in our communities. Success depends on active participation from leaders across our member institutions and the commitment of our represented community members.

We understand that if we are not growing, we are declining; and if we are not getting stronger, we are getting weaker. This plan charts a path for growth, strength, and meaningful impact in 2026.