



THE Heart OF THE TRIANGLE

Sharing the vision
and supporting the mission of the
Triangle area non-profit community

WakeUP Wake County Supports Our Community with Sustainable, Healthy Initiatives

By Judy Liu, MPH

Wake County is one of the fastest growing counties in the United States. The mild seasonal weather, cultural diversity, reasonable cost of living and job opportunities attract the interest of thousands of individuals, many of which eventually move into the county.

WakeUP Wake County is a non-profit, non-partisan advocacy organization. Their mission is to promote good growth planning and sustainable, healthy communities through education, advocacy and civic engagement in the interest of advancing a higher quality of life for all. The organization plans initiatives that promote vibrant, mixed-use, walkable communities offering diverse housing choices and transportation options. Their goal is to ensure that proper infrastructure is paid for with methods that are fair and equitable to all taxpayers and do not unfairly burden those on fixed or low incomes.

WakeUP's work focuses on advocating in three key issue areas: clean and plentiful drinking water, sustainable development and transportation and strong public schools.

WakeUP represents thousands of concerned citizens and currently has about 6,000 members. As an advocacy organization, they support policies that will improve the lives of all residents. Since 2006, WakeUP has successfully advocated for policies that improve quality of life for the one million plus residents

WakeUP has been the driving force behind many positive changes in Wake County, especially within our public school system. I know that lots of people in our community, me included, see this organization as the go-to local voice when problems need to be addressed, but they're also genuinely nice people who really care about improving our communities." —Bill Clifford

of our capital county. These policies include: Creation of a plan to protect our precious drinking water resource, Falls Lake; increased local impact fees to ensure developers pay their fair share of costs; approval of a bike share program that will encourage healthy communities through active transportation; increased funding for our Wake County teachers and rapidly growing public school system and much more.

WakeUP has advocated for the development of a better public transit system that is reliable and equitable and that will encourage economic development, protect our environment and provide access for those in need. In 2016, Wake County voters will decide whether to fund an expanded bus system and commuter rail line for the county. If approved, this plan would increase access to public transit

WakeUP Wake County and the impactful people that make up the organization have shown me that a small group of people can make a difference. Through educating the public about important issues, WakeUP not only energizes the community but also brings awareness about sustainable growth and planning. WakeUP has increased my knowledge of current issues and has encouraged me to become a more involved and passionate citizen of Wake County."

—Megan Rogers

for tens of thousands across our county, and would result in 50% of residents and 70% of jobs being within 1/2 mile of a bus stop.

Through community education, informational events, communication with elected officials and other initiatives, WakeUP educates citizens and policy-makers about proper growth planning while maintaining a high quality of life in Wake County.

Wake Transit: Moving us all forward is an upcoming major community event centered on the Wake County Transit Plan and the benefits that transit will bring to Wake County. It will feature a major keynote speaker and a panel discussion featuring people telling their transit stories. This free public event is currently scheduled for June 23 from 7–8:30pm. All are welcome and encouraged to attend! For information and to confirm the date and time, visit www.wakeupwakecounty.org.

WakeUP has several volunteer committees: Water, Land Use and Transportation, Education, Development/Fundraising and Finance. These issue-focused committees help guide policy actions while the administrative committees provide vital support in keeping the organization running.

WakeUP invites you to join a growing group of volunteers who go out into the community and talk to the public about WakeUP's mission at community festivals and events and through the Speakers' Bureau. Contact Grassroots and Membership Coordinator Jennifer Dean at jennifer@wakeupwakecounty.org or 812-584-8151.