

Meet Jasmine Zavala — the candidate promising smart growth and community Voices in Wake Forest

Jasmine Zavala, a Wake Forest native and nonprofit leader, is running for town commissioner, pledging smart growth, affordable housing, and stronger community engagement as Wake Forest rapidly expands.

By Justin Thompson | jthompson@wakeweekly.com | 919-424-1780





She went on to serve with Teach for America, teaching in low-income communities in Eastern North Carolina, and worked with organizations like United Way and The Food Bank to improve access to services.



Those experiences taught her the importance of collaboration across sectors and how data-informed policy can improve people's lives.



For Zavala, the challenges she hopes to tackle are familiar. Wake Forest is growing fast, and she wants to make sure its growth is both inclusive and well-planned.

She points to Census Bureau projections that suggest Wake Forest could approach 118,000 residents over the next two decades, changes she believes require proactive rather than reactive planning.

“We need data-driven decisions that tie infrastructure and development together,” Zavala said. “We want old neighbors and new neighbors alike to feel included and supported.”

Housing affordability is another priority.

Having recently purchased her own home and watched friends struggle to move back to Wake Forest, she wants the board to ensure options exist for young families, seniors and long-time residents.

“Wake Forest must remain welcoming,” she said. “Not everyone should feel like they need to leave because of cost.”

To keep local government connected to the people it serves, Zavala promises regular listening sessions and accessible communication, using everyday language to explain terms like rezoning and infrastructure.

“My role would be to act as a bridge between experts and the community,” she said. “Growth is inevitable, so let’s shape it together.”

The topics she hopes to influence are timely, Wake Forest is planning for an Amtrak station, corridor revitalizations, and steps to improve walkability and biking access. 

As a vision, Zavala likens it to parenting a child: helping the town grow safely, responsibly and with a clear sense of purpose. 

Early voting in Wake County starts Oct. 16, with Election Day Nov. 4.



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