



VOICES TO VOTES NC

# THE LOCAL LOOP

OCTOBER ISSUE

## VOTE TO PREVENT WILMINGTON'S TRAGEDY OF THE COMMONS

SPECIAL ELECTION EDITION COMING SOON!

First introduced by ecologist Garrett Hardin in the 1960s, the concept of the Tragedy of the Commons illustrates what occurs when **individuals act in their own self-interest rather than for the collective good**. Over time, shared community resources—our “commons”—are depleted until little remains for anyone.

Today, **Wilmington’s natural environment and quality of life represent our modern commons**. These shared assets—our tree canopy, clean water, open spaces, and distinct sense of place—belong to all of us. Yet they are being **diminished by decisions that prioritize short-term profit** over long-term community health and resilience.

The good news is that this trajectory can be changed. Our elected leaders have the authority to shape policies that protect, restore, and sustain these vital resources. **But it is up to us to elect leaders who value the public good** over private gain—leaders who will safeguard Wilmington’s environmental and social well-being for generations to come.

This election marks a critical turning point. Early Voting runs from October 16th through November 1st. Election Day is November 4th. When you cast your ballot, choose City Council candidates who will protect what makes Wilmington a vibrant, livable, and sustainable community.

**Democracy is not a spectator sport—your vote is your voice.**



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VISIT [VOICESTOVOTESNC.ORG](https://voicestovotesnc.org) TO LEARN MORE

# Understanding the Terms

Political jargon can get confusing, but we're here to make it simple.

## Insanity

**Definition:** Doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results.

It's a fair question to ask—**does it make sense to keep electing City Council candidates who continue to deliver the same outcomes for Wilmington?**

If residents want to see meaningful change—on issues like traffic, overdevelopment, flooding, and transparency—we must **elect leaders who are willing to challenge the status quo and put the community's long-term interests first.**



## Understanding Concurrency

Concurrency refers to the **alignment of growth with infrastructure.** In essence, it ensures that roads, schools, water systems, and public services *are available before or in step with new development.*

Currently, Wilmington's **rapid pace of multi-family residential construction far exceeds the rate of infrastructure improvements.** The results are evident: congested roads, overcrowded schools, and increased flooding.

Wilmington needs stronger concurrency regulations to ensure that growth does not exceed the city's capacity to support it. **Responsible growth isn't anti-development**—it's sound planning that preserves the quality of life for everyone who calls Wilmington home.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THIS YEAR'S CANDIDATES



# Citizen Voices

## CONCERNS OVER DEVELOPMENT TRANSPARENCY

In recent weeks, Wilmington resident Jane H. has voiced strong concerns to City Planning Staff **regarding the proposed rezoning of a parcel at Oleander Drive and Independence Boulevard**. Her comments, shared through email exchanges and public discussion, **reflect a growing frustration among residents who feel disconnected from the city's development decisions**.



Jane described her experience attending the September 2024 City Council meeting as **deeply disheartening**:

“The last City Council meeting I attended was a disgrace. It was a staged performance, not a genuine forum. Two hours of my time—my life—were wasted. When Mayor Saffo abruptly closed the meeting without allowing citizens or legal counsel to respond, he made it clear: our presence was tolerated, not respected. Every person who showed up in good faith was dismissed as if we were too naïve to recognize a pre-scripted outcome. That wasn’t public service—it was **political theater**.”

Her frustration extends beyond that meeting. Jane pointed to ongoing issues such as **unauthorized tree removal** at Midtown & Main, calling it:

“A blatant **violation of public trust** and environmental stewardship. Developers are flouting regulations and treating fines as a minor inconvenience. **This community is tired** of watching developers bend rules, exploit loopholes, and bulldoze our shared values.”

She also emphasized that residents are not anti-growth—but want **accountability and fairness**:

“Developers are operating with impunity, and unless the Planning Staff and City Council show real backbone, this will continue. Citizens are not obstacles to be ignored—**we are voters, taxpayers, and guardians of this community**.”

Jane’s comments capture the sentiment shared by many Wilmington residents who are increasingly concerned that **rapid development is outpacing infrastructure, worsening traffic, and eroding green spaces**.

“This project represents everything residents are frustrated with about Wilmington’s current development trajectory. Our town is being overbuilt, traffic is spiraling out of control, and our green spaces are disappearing at an alarming rate. Residents are increasingly concerned that their elected officials prioritize developer profits over community welfare. Your decision on this project will send a clear signal about where you stand.”

Her message is clear: **Wilmington’s residents want leadership that listens, acts responsibly, and places the community’s welfare above profit motives**.

“We’re counting on our elected officials to make the right choice—and to show us that our trust in them is well-placed.”

LEARN HOW TO TAKE ACTION HERE





# Celebrate Success

## Blending Growth with Green: Lumina Station

In 1996, local developers Joel Tomaselli, Jim Wallace of Intracoastal Realty, and Gene Miller redeveloped a former mobile home park on Eastwood Road—just across from Landfall’s main entrance—into what is now Lumina Station, a mixed-use shopping and office destination.

Its four buildings, all different, were designed to look historic and feature sloping roofs, porches with columns and large windows. The design and architecture pays homage to our relaxed coastal lifestyle and style, creating a unique sense of place.

**Special attention was given to preserving existing trees and installing a beautiful landscape design to soften the visual impact of the structures.**

While many recent development projects focus on maximizing density with little concern for aesthetics and the environment, Lumina Station’s long term success shows that **our community can grow through thoughtful, sustainable planning while retaining our unique charm and character.**

Congratulations and sincere thanks to the developers for setting a standard that inspires responsible growth in our region.



## Did You Know...

### LOW-IMPACT DEVELOPMENT IN WILMINGTON, NC

Wilmington’s rapid growth often feels like a race between bulldozers and infrastructure. But not all development has to come at the expense of our tree canopy, stormwater systems, and quality of life.

A proven alternative—**Low-Impact Development (LID)**—offers a smarter way forward.

**LID works with the environment rather than against it.**

By incorporating features like permeable pavement, rain gardens, preserved trees, and natural drainage, these projects **reduce flooding risks, protect water quality, and create more livable spaces for residents.**

LID demonstrates that **responsible development and economic growth** can coexist when sustainability guides design.



LEARN MORE ABOUT LOW-INCOME DEVELOPMENT



# Early Voting Opens Soon

## MAKE A PLAN TO VOTE

Get ready to vote early in New Hanover County! In-person early voting begins **Thursday, October 16th** and runs through **Saturday, November 1, 2025**.

Cast your ballot at the **Northeast Library** (1241 Military Cutoff Rd, Wilmington), open weekdays from 8 AM–5 PM and select weekend hours.

**Starting October 25**, you'll also be able to vote at **Carolina Beach Town Hall, Cape Fear Community College (McLeod Building), and the Senior Resource Center** during extended hours—including early start times on the final Saturday.

**Don't miss this opportunity ahead of Election Day! Make a plan to vote!**



### Early voting numbers in New Hanover County are slipping.

According to WHQR, in 2021, about 6% of registered voters turned out early—but **last municipal election (2023), that number dropped to just 5%.**

Residents worked hard to bring additional early voting sites to our county, so let's take advantage of them, research our candidates, and make sure **more voices are heard at the polls this year.**

FIND EARLY VOTING INFORMATION HERE

