

# County seeking input from residents for land-use plan

## Athens-Clarke planning department

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Athens-Clarke County wants your opinion on the future of the city.

The county planning department is surveying residents to find out what they think about issues like jobs, growth, education, the environment, roads, public transit, culture and recreation. The results will be used to help craft the county's new land-use plan, a state-mandated document that will guide development for the next decade.

Surveys are available online at [www.acplanning.com](http://www.acplanning.com), as an insert in Sunday's Athens Banner-Herald and were sent home last week with Clarke County elementary school children. The deadline to fill one out is May 1.

The University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government, which is handling the surveys for the planning department, also mailed out 2,000 surveys to random households, hoping for responses from a representative sample of residents. About 350 are expected to respond, Vinson institute public service assistant Richard Clark said.

The random surveys will be given more weight than other responses, Clark said.

Since the survey was posted online April 10, 670 people have filled it out, 145 of them on the first day, Clark said.

The survey won't be the only opportunity for public participation. Citizens' committees that are studying population trends, economic development, the environment, culture, government facilities and services, housing, land use and transportation are meeting monthly and are open to the public.

Over the summer, the county also will host public workshops to consider changes to zoning maps, planner Julie Morgan said.

Planners hope to finish the land-use plan by this fall and send it to the county commission, then the state Department of Community Affairs, for approval. The deadline to finish the plan is August 2008.

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