

# **Citizen Attitudes about the Present and Future of Athens-Clarke County**

---

## **A Report on the Athens-Clarke County Comprehensive Plan Survey**

**Richard L. Clark and Terry Adams  
Survey Research Unit**

**Prepared for  
The Athens-Clarke Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee  
and the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department**



Carl Vinson **Institute of Government**

---

The University of Georgia

**Carl Vinson Institute of Government  
University of Georgia  
Athens, Georgia**

**June 2007**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS****Results**

	Page number
General Issues	1
Ratings of Characteristics and Services	4
Importance of Issues	7
Support/Opposition to Policy Options	8
Sources of Information	10
Conclusions	11

**Annotated Questionnaires**

General Population Survey	12
Elementary School Parent Survey	19
Spanish Language Survey	26
Web Survey	33
Newspaper Insert Survey	40
Slides from presentation to Athens-Clarke Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee	47

In February 2007, the Unified Government of Athens-Clarke County (ACC) commissioned the Survey Research Unit at the University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government (CVIOG) to conduct a random general population survey of ACC residents and to allow any resident the opportunity to respond to the survey questions in a non-random attempt to hear from as many citizens as possible.

Unless specifically stated, the following analysis concerns only the general population survey—the data collected via mail by a random sample of Athens-Clarke households. The purpose of the general population survey is to have the best estimate of the public's view of the issues without the bias of self selection. These data have been tabulated and weighted on the criteria of gender, race and ethnicity, and age to improve our ability to generalize to the entire adult population. Initially, 2000 surveys were mailed out to a random selection of ACC households, based on sample drawn by Market Systems Group in Ann Arbor, Michigan. A follow up mailing with a copy of the survey went out three weeks later to all sample elements who had not yet responded. Of the 2000 selected households, 323 were returned as undeliverable, and 347 were completed and returned for analysis—a response rate of 21 percent.

In addition to the general population survey, input was collected from anyone who wished to respond through the Planning Department's web site ([accplanning.com](http://accplanning.com)), through a local newspaper, and in a survey sent home to parents of elementary school children. The school survey was also translated into Spanish and sent home to Spanish speaking households. The data from these special populations is not generalizable to any broader group, and should be read as representative only of those who chose to participate. These efforts reflect the county's desire to hear from as many citizens as possible, and to add to the general population survey results by including the voices of citizens with special concerns. The results from each special population are attached to the end of this report.

## **Results**

Poverty was the most frequently cited issue facing the county (30 percent) and cited as the top issue by 15 percent of all respondents. Transportation (28 percent) and jobs (27 percent) closely followed in the frequency of citations as the most issues facing the county. The thing about Athens most liked by residents is the downtown and entertainment venues (47 percent). One-third of the respondents cite the small town feel of Athens as what they like best.

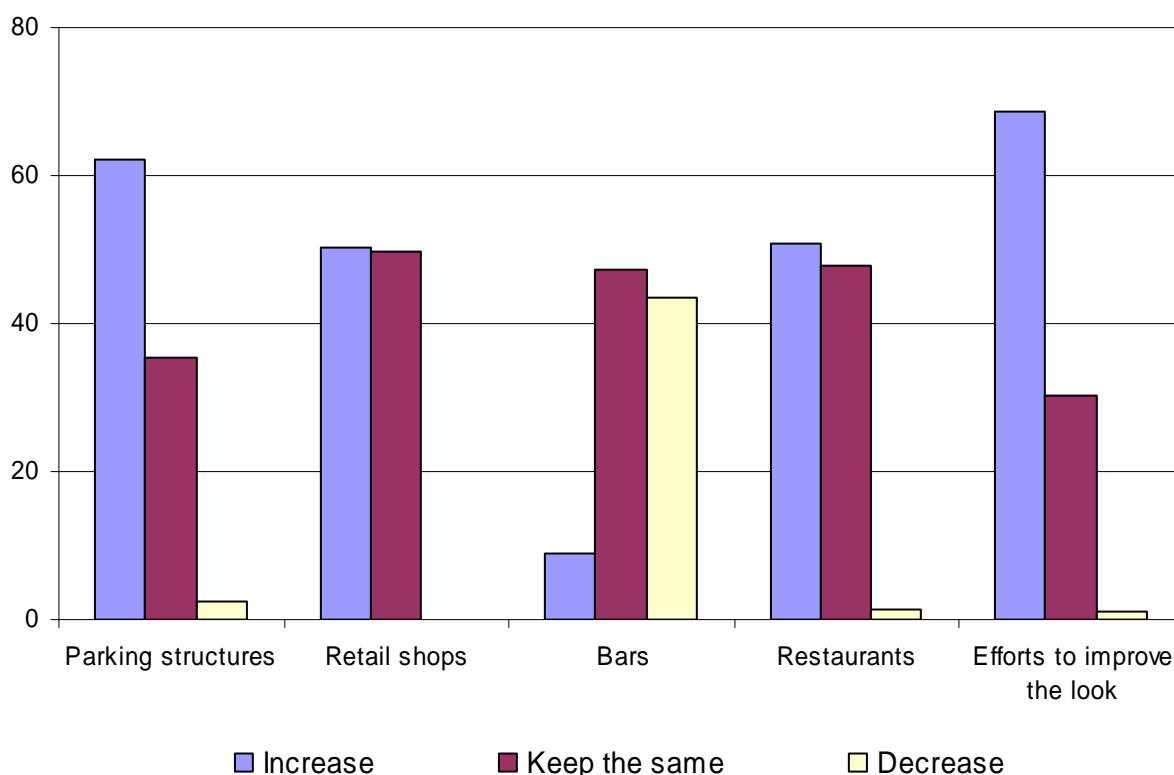
While more than twice as many respondents felt ACC was on the right track than the wrong track (45 percent versus 20 percent), more than one third of respondents (36 percent) were not sure. Black (26 percent) and Hispanic (39 percent) respondents were more likely than whites (17 percent) to say that ACC is on the wrong track.

More than half of all respondents (53 percent) say that the rate of commercial growth in the county is just about right; 27 percent say that there is currently too much growth, and 20 percent say that there is too little growth. Half of all respondents with only a high school degree say that there is too much commercial growth, and 46 percent of respondents with household incomes about \$100,000 believe that there has been too little growth.

As far as what type of growth is preferred, most residents prefer environmentally friendly businesses (59 percent) and technical and medical industry (56 percent). Industrial (23 percent) and large retail (25 percent) are the least preferred. Older residents are more likely to prefer industrial development than are younger Athenians.

In brief, residents would like to see an increase in efforts to improve the aesthetics of the downtown area, to see an increase in parking, and to see a decrease in the number of bars.

**Figure 1: Support for Ideas to Improve the Quality of the Downtown Area**



By far the two most frequently cited barriers to the unemployed finding and holding jobs were a lack of specific job skills and abilities (45 percent) and a lack of entry level jobs (28 percent). Blacks (54 percent) were more likely than whites (38 percent) to cite a lack of specific job skills.

Sixty-five percent of respondents felt that the cost of housing was at least somewhat affordable (15 percent extremely, 50 percent somewhat), and the 18-24 age group was the one most likely to agree with this (78 percent). There were no major income differences on this issue. Blacks (24.4 percent) were much more likely than whites (6.1 percent) to rate the cost of housing as

extremely unaffordable, but blacks were also much more likely to rate the cost as extremely affordable (21 percent compared to 14 percent for whites).

Seventy-three percent of homeowners rated property taxes as extremely (29 percent) or somewhat (45 percent) high, but 62 percent of homeowners still felt that the cost of housing in ACC was at least somewhat affordable. There is a significant correlation between one's perception of the affordability of housing and one's perception of property tax rates; those who believe that taxes are extremely high are least likely to find housing in Athens affordable ( $\tau = 3.84, p < 0.003$ ).

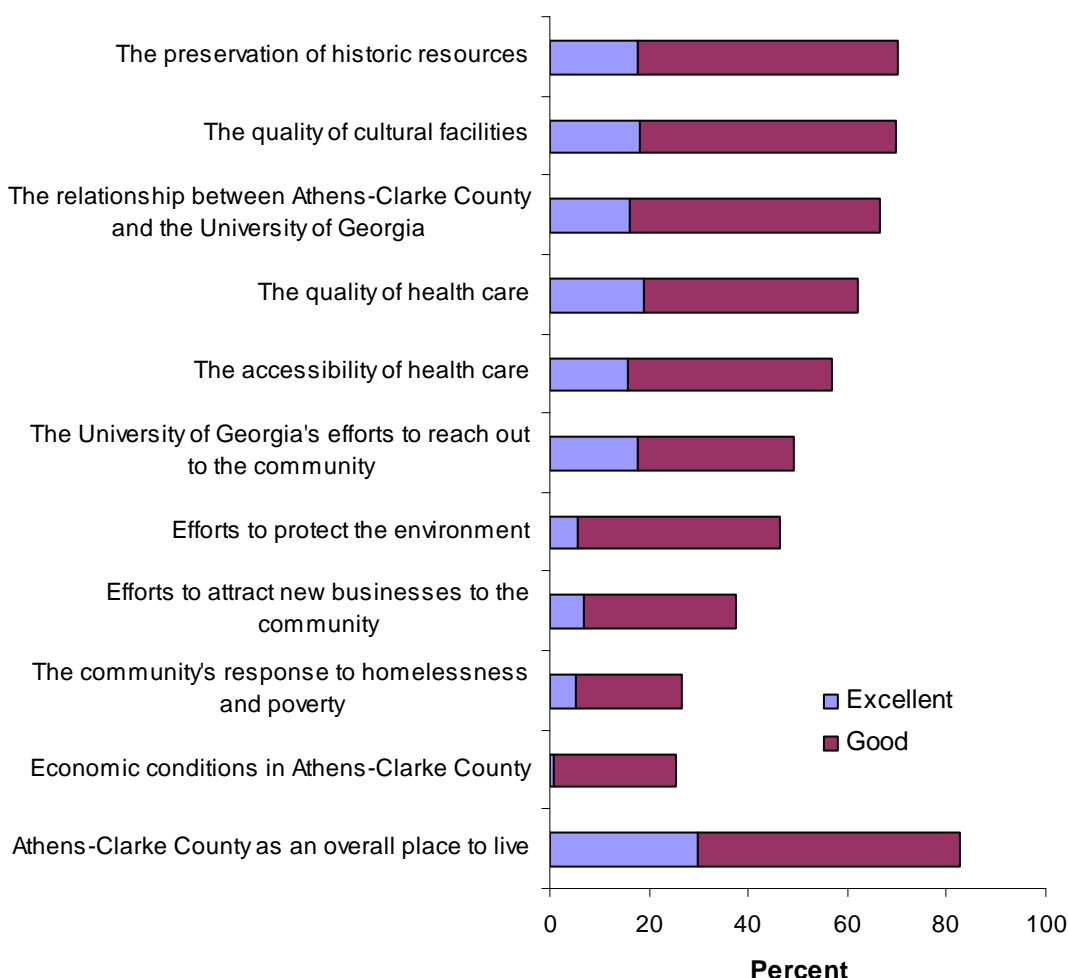
Sixty-three percent of respondents felt that there should be an increase in the number of downtown parking structures, and 69 percent wanted an increase in efforts to improve the look.

### How would you rate...?<sup>1</sup>

It is typical in satisfaction surveys that broad measures—those assessing conditions overall—receive higher ratings than specific measures, and that the general assessments are more positive than are summative scores. This was the case in the ACC Comprehensive Plan Survey. Eighty-three percent of the public said ACC was an excellent (30 percent) or good (53 percent) overall place to live. Of those with a 4 year degree, 98 percent rated ACC as excellent or good overall.

Of the areas included on the survey, the public rated preservation of historical resources and quality of cultural facilities highest. It should be recognized, however, that historical preservation is not as important a policy concern as other areas, notably crime and schools (see Figure 4).

**Figure 2: Ratings of general aspects of life in Athens-Clarke County**



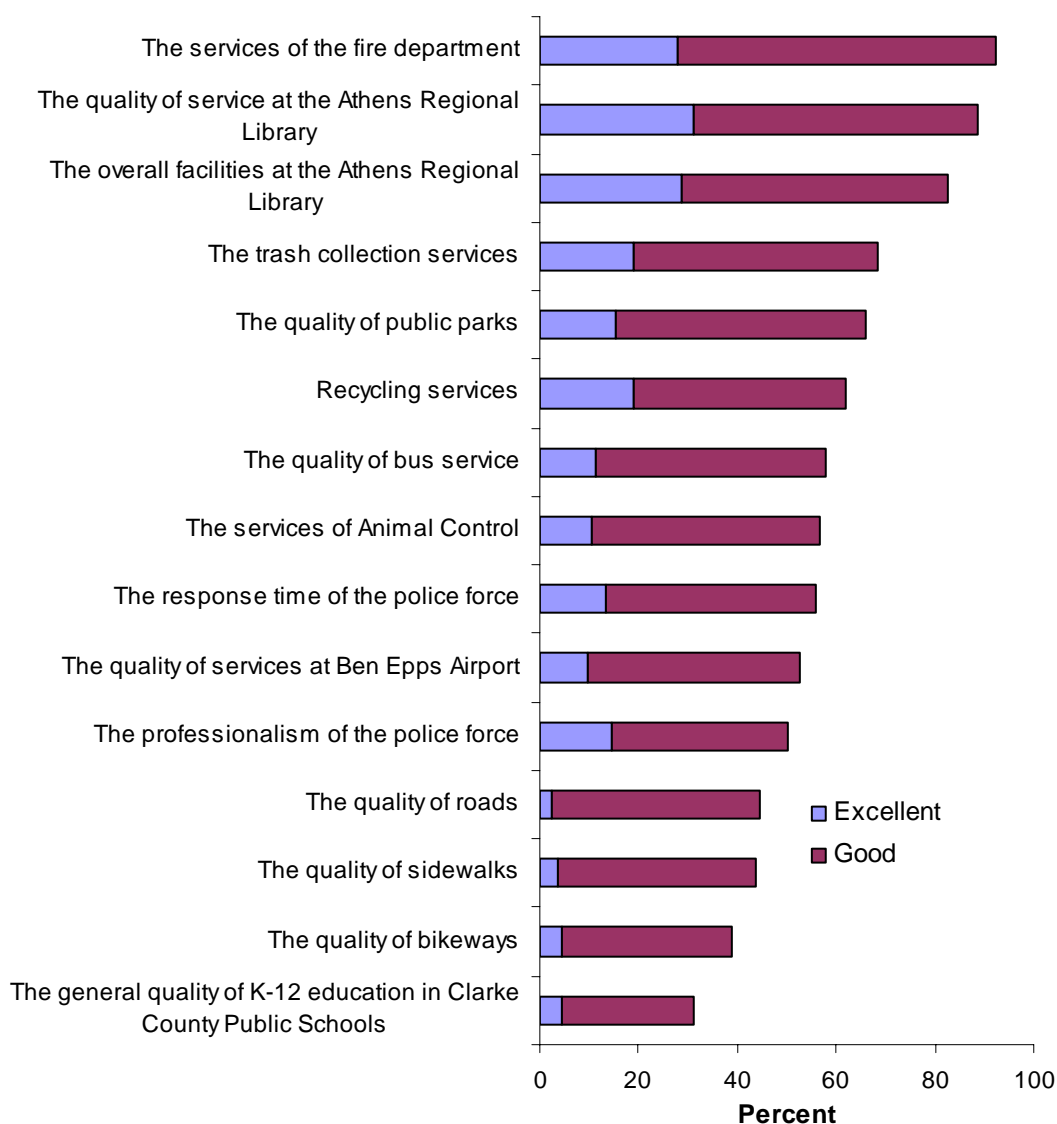
<sup>1</sup> The base for percentages for ratings are taken from the number of respondents offering an opinion on a given question; those who either did not respond or responded "Not sure" are omitted from the base. The attached annotated questionnaire shows the percent of respondents saying "Not sure."

Regarding the University of Georgia (UGA), 67 percent of respondents saw the relationship between Athens and UGA as excellent or good, but only 50 percent felt this way about UGA's efforts to reach out to the community. Whites were more likely to say these efforts were excellent or good (56.7 percent) compared to blacks (37 percent) and Hispanics (30 percent).

Three-quarters of all respondents (75 percent) saw economic conditions in ACC as fair (50 percent) or poor (25 percent), which represented the highest combined percentage of fair and poor ratings for any one category. Women were more likely than men to rate economic conditions as poor (31 percent compared to 18 percent).

Sixty-three percent of respondents rated efforts to attract new businesses to the community as fair (32 percent) or poor (30.8 percent), with Hispanics (50 percent) and blacks (45.7 percent) more likely to rate them as poor than whites (22.6 percent).

**Figure 3: Ratings of services in Athens-Clarke County**



The highest rated category was the services of the fire department, with 91 percent of respondents rating the fire department as excellent (28 percent) or good (64 percent). Following the fire department was the Athens Regional Library services and facilities.

Sixty-nine percent rated Clarke County public schools as poor (40 percent) or fair (29 percent), which was the second highest percentage of poor ratings. However, there were some interesting category breakdowns. For instance, 52 percent of respondents who have children in Clarke County public schools rated K-12 education as excellent or good, compared to 27 percent of those who do not have children in public schools. Furthermore, only 7 percent of respondents with children in public school rated schools as poor, compared to a poor rating of 47 percent from the rest of the sample.

Ratings of schools also was partly determined by the race of the respondent. Half of all African-American respondents (50 percent) rated K-12 education as excellent or good, compared to 22 percent for whites. Homeowners also rate schools more favorably—with 46 percent of them rating the schools as excellent or good, compared to only 17 percent of non-homeowners. Younger and less wealthy respondents were most likely to rate the schools as poor: 67 percent of the 18-24 age group and 61 percent of those making less than \$20,000 rated the schools as poor.

Only 31 percent of the sample even so much as gave a rating for Ben Epps Airport. Clearly, the airport is not a salient concern for residents. Those who offered an opinion on the airport were slightly more on the positive side (53 percent citing excellent or good) than on the negative side (47 percent fair or poor).

74 percent rated the community's response to homelessness as fair (31 percent) or poor (43 percent), which represented the highest percentage of poor ratings for any one category. Blacks were much more likely to rate the response as poor than whites were (68 percent compared to 32 percent), and women were more likely to rate it as poor than men were (48 percent compared to 37 percent). The same was true for nonhomeowners compared to homeowners (53 percent compared to 31 percent).

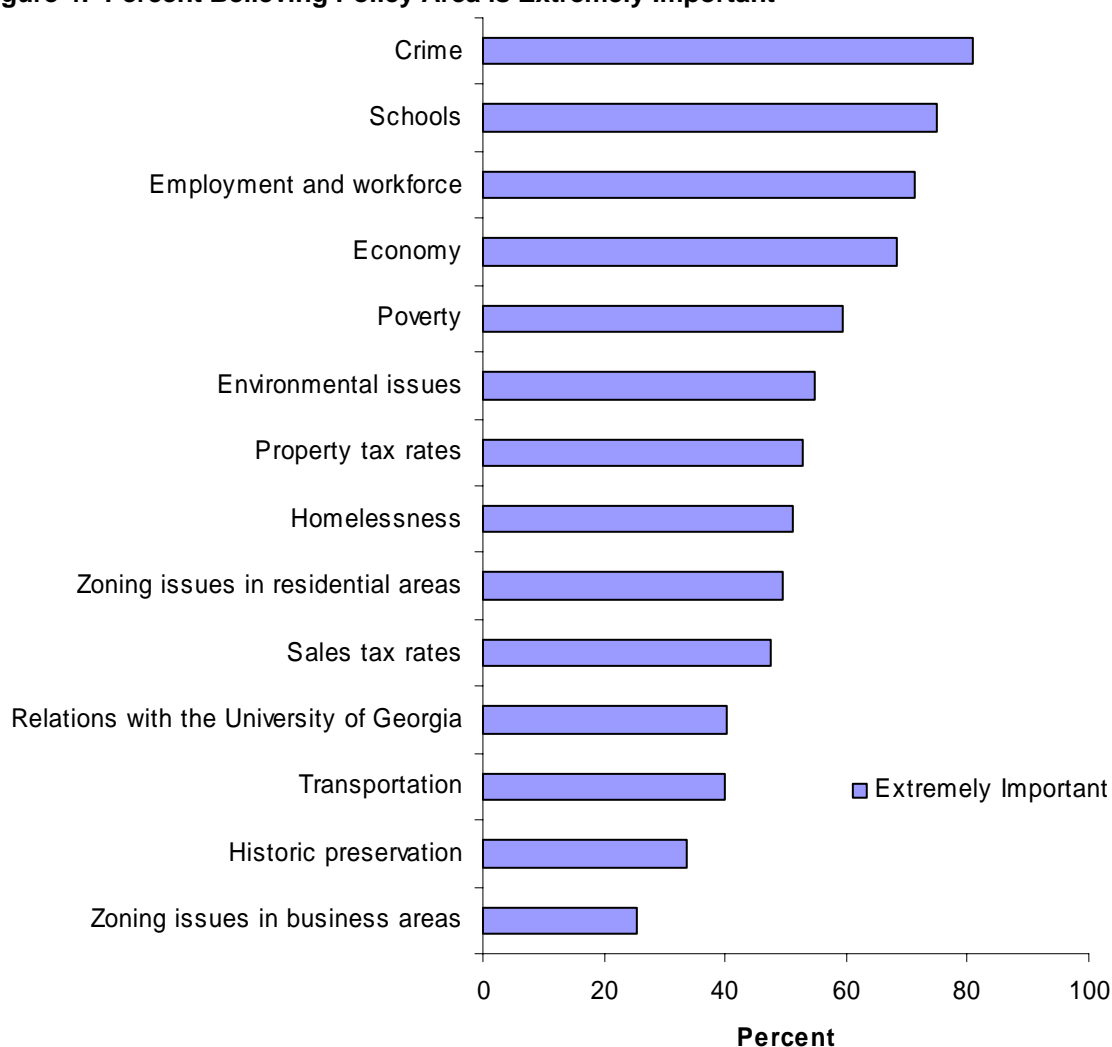
The police department's response time was regarded a little bit more favorably than its professionalism. 57 percent felt that response time was excellent or good, compared to 51 percent who felt that way about professionalism. In both cases, homeowners had a more favorable opinion than non-homeowners: (63 percent compared to 39 percent on professionalism, and 70 percent compared to 43 percent on response time). Favorable ratings on both professionalism and response time tended to be higher for older age groups. Whites were more likely to rate response time as excellent or good (66 percent) compared to blacks (44 percent). Whites and blacks offered similar ratings for professionalism, but only 39 percent of Hispanics rated professionalism as excellent or good.



## Importance of Issues

All issues were considered to be at least somewhat important by the respondents. Besides zoning in business areas (which was 62.7 percent), all the issues garnered a percentage of at least 79 when the very and somewhat important percentages were added together. Leading the way was crime with 98 percent, including 80.5 percent who said it was extremely important. For schools, the rating was 90.6 percent, including 75 percent who felt they were extremely important. Employment and workforce and economy drew similar ratings, with 95.7 percent saying that the economy was important (68 percent extremely important) and 95 percent saying that employment and workforce was important (70.8 percent extremely important). Other issues which drew a rating of at least 50 percent on extremely important were environmental issues (54.6 percent) and property tax rates (52.3 percent).

**Figure 4: Percent Believing Policy Area is Extremely Important**



Comparatively speaking, the least important issue by far was zoning in business areas, with 63 percent saying it was extremely (25 percent) or somewhat (37 percent) important. 25 percent also represented the lowest percentage of extremely important ratings. This rating was affected to some degree by the 18-24 age group, of which only 25 percent said the issue was extremely or somewhat important. No other age group had a figure of lower than 73 percent.

### **Support/Oppose policy suggestions**

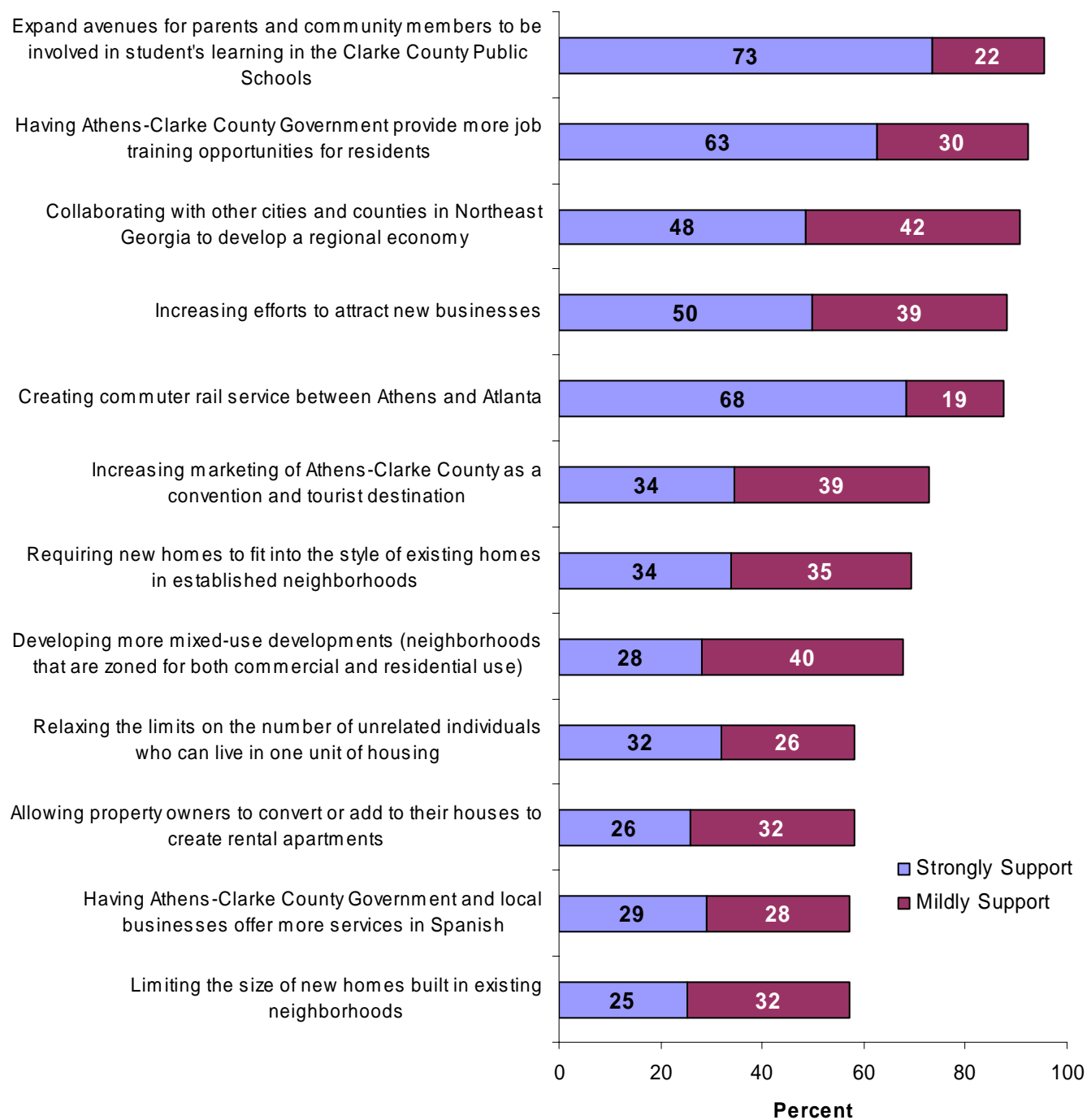
For all policy suggestions, a majority of respondents expressed at least mild support. The most widely supported policy was to expand parent and community involvement in public education, drawing support from 95.5 percent of respondents (with 73 percent strongly supporting it) (see Figure 5). Women, however, were more likely to strongly support this than men (83 percent compared to 63 percent), while blacks (88 percent) and Hispanics (80 percent) were more likely to express strong support than whites (63 percent).

Also garnering strong support was an increase in job training for residents, with 92 percent in favor of it (62 percent strongly supporting). Only 42 percent of whites strongly supported increased job training opportunities, compared to 93 percent of blacks, and 90 percent of Hispanics.

Another popular policy was the addition of an Athens-Atlanta commuter rail, with 88 percent of respondents supporting it (and 69 percent expressing strong support). Increasing efforts to attract new businesses (88 percent support, 49 percent strong support) and development of a regional economy (91 percent support, 49 percent strong support) were also popular.

The strongest opposition was found for an increase in Spanish language services, with 43 percent of respondents expressing opposition, and 28 percent expressing strong opposition. Fifty-six percent of whites opposed this (36 percent of them strongly), compared to 36 percent of blacks and 0 Hispanics.

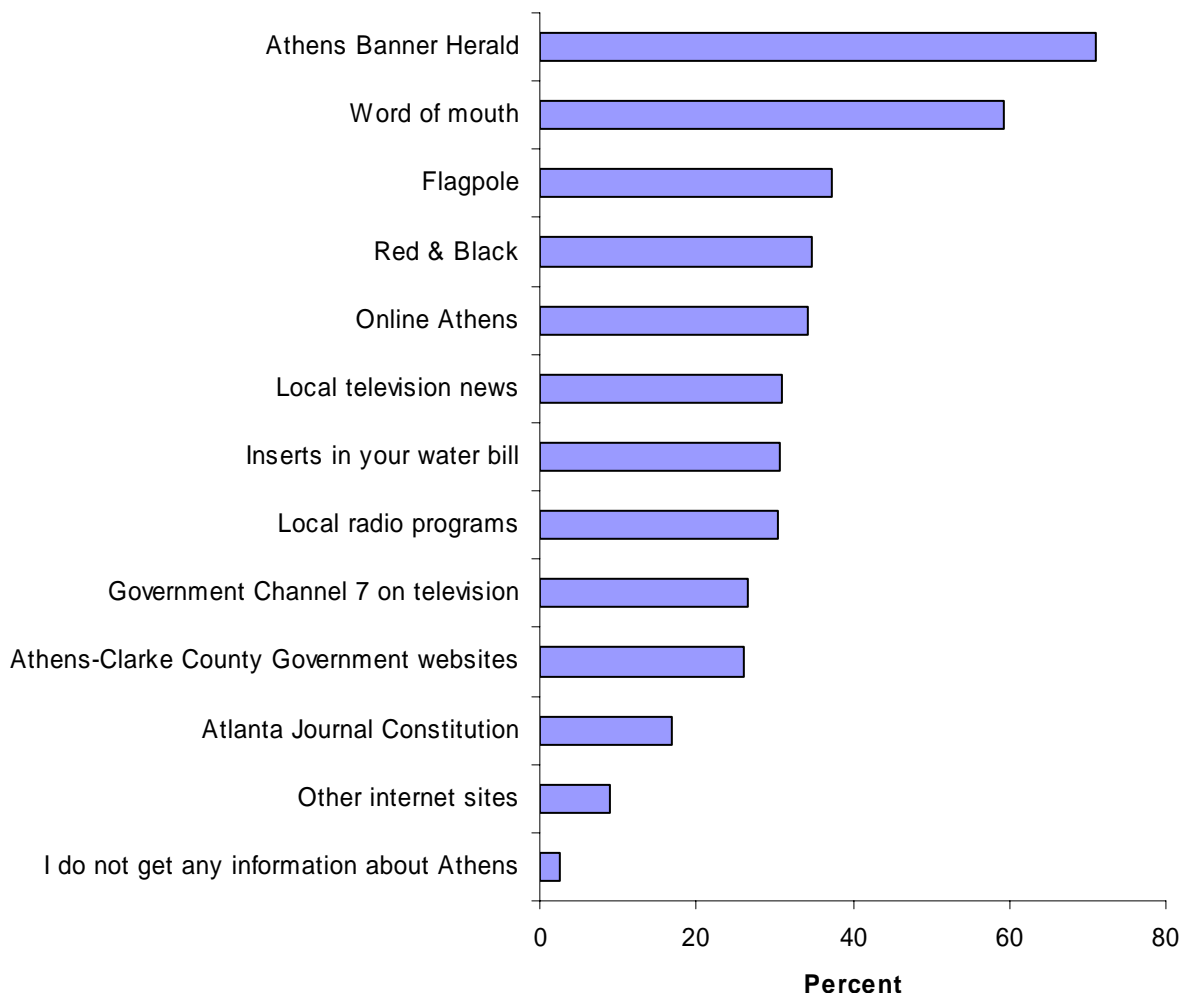
Similar figures were found for a loosening of zoning laws to increase the number of unrelated people who can live in a unit of housing. Here, 42 percent of respondents were opposed, and 25 percent were strongly opposed. Allowing property owners to convert or add to their houses to create rental apartments or “granny flats” drew 42 percent opposition, with 21 percent strongly opposing it, and size restrictions on infill development were opposed by 43 percent of respondents, with 14 percent expressing strong opposition.

**Figure 5: Support for Various Policy Areas**

## Sources of Information

The most common source of information about Athens-Clarke County Government is the Athens Banner Herald, cited by 71 percent of respondents; word of mouth was the second most commonly cited source (59 percent). The government television channel and the county's web site—two sites on which the government can control the content—are cited by slightly more than one in four respondents, but less relied upon than most media sources.

**Figure 6: Sources of Information about Athens-Clarke County Government**



For respondents ages 18 to 24, the most commonly cited source of information is the Red and Black, and for Hispanics, word of mouth is more common than the ABH. Radio is a much more relied upon as source of information about the county for older Georgians than for younger ones.

## Conclusions

It is clear that the majority of ACC residents are happy with the direction of the county; only 20 percent of the respondents say that the county is on the wrong track, and a majority believe that the rate of growth in the county is about right. Primarily, residents enjoy the downtown area and the multitude of cultural and entertainment venues. The Botanical Garden and the Classics Center were the most singled out as local assets. While the presence of the University of Georgia creates issues that many residents site as problematic, the University's presence in the county is more often seen as a positive asset by Athens' residents.

It appears that the Partnership for a Prosperous Athens raised awareness of the issue of poverty in the county, but when compared with broader issues, such as schools, crime, and the economy—poverty is seen as an extremely important issue to less residents. It is possible, however, that the PPA also raised awareness of the link between poverty and these other issues.

There also seems to be a good deal of support for the local government. While 9 percent cited the government as a problem in the county, 5 percent cited the government and politics in the area as one of the things they like best. Given that respondents had three opportunities to list problems and only two to list what they like best, and given the tendency for survey respondents to criticize government and not praise government, these numbers should be seen in a positive light.

## GENERAL POPULATION SURVEY ANNOTATED QUESTIONNAIRE

The general population survey consists of 347 completed surveys of a random sample of Athens households. The data are weighted to reflect the known demographic parameters on race, gender, and age.

What do you see as the three most important issues facing Athens-Clarke County today? (Asked open-ended)

	Percentage of respondents who listed issue	Percentage of respondents who listed issue as most important
Poverty	30.1%	15.3%
Sprawl/overcrowding	25.2%	10.5%
Education	24.5%	9.8%
Traffic/transportation	28.3%	9.5%
Crime	25.6%	7.8%
Jobs	27.1%	6.8%
Housing/homelessness	17.2%	6.7%
Health care	10.5%	4.3%
Taxes/tax base	8.9%	3.9%
Environment/green space	11.2%	3.1%
Athens-Clarke County government	8.5%	1.6%
Downtown	2.7%	1.5%
Historic preservation	3.2%	1.4%
Immigration issues	5.3%	0.6%
Problems with the University of Georgia	3.6%	0.5%
Other	23.7%	8.4%

What do you like best about Athens-Clarke County? (Asked open-ended)

Downtown/restaurants/entertainment	46.7%
Size/small town/quiet town	33.3%
UGA	22.9%
Diversity/people	18.6%
Climate/green/environment/location	14.4%
Cost of living/economy	6.7%
Housing/homelessness	6.7%
Low crime/safe	5.0%
Politics	4.6%
History	3.1%
Transit system	2.3%
Nothing	1.8%
Other	5.1%

Generally speaking, would you say things in Athens-Clarke County are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

Right direction	44.9%
Wrong track	20.2%
Not sure	34.9%

How would you characterize the rate of commercial growth in Athens-Clarke County today?

Too much growth	26.9%
About the right amount of growth	52.9%
Too little growth	20.1%

What type of development would you like to attract to Athens-Clarke County? (Select all that apply)

Industrial	23.3%
Large retail	24.7%
Small retail	41.1%
Technical and medical industry	56.2%
Environmentally friendly businesses	58.6%
No development	8.6%

How affordable or unaffordable is the cost of housing in Athens-Clarke County?

Extremely affordable	15.1%
Somewhat affordable	49.8%
Somewhat unaffordable	24.3%
Extremely unaffordable	10.9%

Where do you think Athens-Clarke County should concentrate its resources in providing safe and efficient transportation? (Select all that apply)

Improve and maintain local roads	68.8%
Road widening	36.3%
Bike lanes and bike paths	34.9%
Bus and transit services	47.4%
Pedestrian facilities	29.9%
Transportation for persons with disabilities	23.6%

What do you see as the main barrier in Athens-Clarke County to the unemployed finding and holding jobs?

A lack of entry level jobs	27.7%
A lack of day care for children	7.3%
A lack of senior citizen care for family	1.1%
A lack of transportation	5.6%
A lack of specific job skills and abilities	44.6%
A lack of personal organizational skills, such as showing up on time	13.7%

What is your favorite activity to do in Athens's parks and cultural facilities? (Asked open-ended)

Walking	20.9%
Playing sports	10.9%
Running	9.5%
Viewing art	9.2%
Viewing nature	8.0%
Picnics/cookouts/family gatherings	7.4%
Bringing pets	6.9%
Hiking	6.6%
Bringing kids	5.8%
Botanical garden	2.3%
Biking	1.9%
Classic Center	1.3%
Other	6.6%

Is there any cultural or recreational activity you would like to do but cannot do because there is no public space or support for it?

Yes	26.9%
No	73.1%

If you answered yes, please list that activity (Asked open-ended)

Outdoor concerts	11.6%
Golf	9.4%
Mountain biking	7.7%
Rollerblading	9.2%
Biking (generic)	6.4%
Water sports (including fishing and swimming)	6.2%
Dancing	5.9%
Horseback riding	5.3%
Climbing	3.3%
Dog park	3.1%
Ice skating	1.9%
Other	31.5%



To improve the quality of the Athens-Clarke County downtown area, would you favor an increase or decrease in any of the following?

	Parking structures	Retail shops	Bars	Restaurants	Efforts to improve the look
Increase	62.5%	49.9%	9.0%	50.5%	68.8%
Keep the same	35.1%	50.1%	47.1%	48.2%	30.1%
Decrease	2.4%	0.0%	43.9%	1.3%	1.1%

Please rate the Athens-Clarke County community on each of the following

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
Athens-Clarke County as an overall place to live	29.7%	51.8%	16.2%	0.8%	1.5%
The general quality of K-12 education in Clarke County Public Schools	3.0%	19.0%	19.4%	26.2%	32.4%
Economic conditions in Athens-Clarke County	0.7%	23.0%	47.0%	23.5%	5.8%
Efforts to attract new businesses to the community	5.1%	23.2%	24.0%	23.5%	24.2%
Efforts to protect the environment	4.8%	34.2%	31.7%	13.6%	15.7%
The quality of roads	2.4%	41.6%	44.8%	10.9%	0.3%
The quality of sidewalks	3.7%	38.4%	43.0%	11.7%	3.2%
The quality of bikeways	3.5%	27.0%	25.8%	20.6%	23.1%
The quality of bus service	9.9%	37.9%	24.8%	10.0%	17.4%
The quality of services at Ben Epps Airport	2.8%	13.7%	11.4%	3.2%	68.9%
The quality of public parks	13.8%	46.1%	25.1%	6.2%	8.8%
The quality of cultural facilities	14.0%	40.1%	17.3%	6.6%	22.0%
The preservation of historic resources	13.8%	40.4%	19.5%	3.6%	22.7%
The community's response to homelessness and poverty	4.4%	17.4%	26.5%	37.0%	14.7%
The quality of health care	15.7%	36.3%	20.5%	11.7%	15.8%
The accessibility of health care	12.7%	33.8%	17.5%	17.0%	19.0%
The professionalism of the police force	12.3%	28.8%	27.4%	13.2%	18.3%
The response time of the police force	8.6%	28.3%	20.2%	8.4%	34.5%
The services of the fire department	14.7%	34.6%	4.6%	0.0%	46.1%
The trash collection services	15.3%	39.8%	19.8%	6.2%	18.9%
Recycling services	14.8%	33.4%	19.0%	10.9%	21.9%
The services of Animal Control	4.8%	22.8%	16.1%	5.7%	50.6%
The quality of service at the Athens Regional Library	21.8%	40.4%	7.9%	0.6%	29.3%

Please rate the Athens-Clarke County community on each of the following (continued)

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
The overall facilities at the Athens Regional Library	20.6%	38.9%	10.0%	2.5%	28.0%
The relationship between Athens-Clarke County and the University of Georgia	13.4%	40.0%	22.4%	4.4%	19.8%
The University of Georgia's efforts to reach out to the community	15.1%	27.3%	30.0%	13.1%	14.5%

Please indicate how important each of the following is to you

	Extremely Important	Somewhat Important	Not Too Important	Not at All Important	Unsure
Economy	67.0%	27.3%	4.2%	0.0%	1.5%
Employment and workforce	70.0%	24.0%	3.0%	1.9%	1.1%
Schools	72.1%	15.0%	7.7%	1.3%	3.9%
Poverty	58.1%	30.8%	7.4%	2.1%	1.6%
Homelessness	49.9%	33.4%	10.4%	4.3%	2.0%
Crime	79.5%	17.3%	2.0%	0.0%	1.2%
Transportation	39.9%	38.4%	18.5%	2.6%	0.6%
Environmental issues	54.0%	37.3%	5.8%	1.8%	1.1%
Historic preservation	32.6%	44.7%	14.5%	5.6%	2.6%
Relations with the University of Georgia	38.4%	40.8%	12.9%	5.1%	2.8%
Zoning issues in residential areas	46.6%	27.6%	15.2%	4.5%	6.1%
Zoning issues in business areas	23.6%	34.9%	27.3%	7.6%	6.6%
Property tax rates	49.0%	29.3%	10.3%	5.0%	6.4%
Sales tax rates	45.2%	39.1%	9.2%	2.3%	4.2%

Please select how likely you are to support or oppose each of the following policy suggestions for Athens-Clarke County

	Strongly Support	Mildly Support	Mildly Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Unsure
Collaborating with other cities and counties in Northeast Georgia to develop a regional economy	42.0%	36.0%	5.8%	2.0%	14.2%
Increasing efforts to attract new businesses	46.3%	37.0%	10.3%	0.8%	5.6%
Developing more mixed-use developments (neighborhoods that are zoned for both commercial and residential use)	25.7%	36.1%	18.7%	11.2%	8.3%
Increasing marketing of Athens-Clarke County as a convention and tourist destination	32.4%	36.4%	21.6%	4.5%	5.1%
Limiting the size of new homes built in existing neighborhoods	23.9%	30.1%	27.1%	13.1%	5.8%
Requiring new homes to fit into the style of existing homes in established neighborhoods	32.4%	33.7%	17.0%	12.8%	4.1%
Allowing property owners to convert or add to their houses to create rental apartments	23.5%	28.9%	19.7%	18.7%	9.2%
Relaxing the limits on the number of unrelated individuals who can live in one unit of housing	30.5%	25.8%	14.8%	24.5%	4.4%
Creating commuter rail service between Athens and Atlanta	66.6%	18.4%	5.7%	6.5%	2.8%
Expand avenues for parents and community members to be involved in student's learning in the Clarke County Public Schools	63.0%	19.3%	3.5%	0.4%	13.8%
Having Athens-Clarke County Government provide more job training opportunities for residents	57.7%	27.3%	5.9%	1.7%	7.4%
Having Athens-Clarke County Government and local businesses offer more services in Spanish	26.5%	25.5%	13.8%	25.6%	8.6%

Are there any children in your household who attend public school (K-12) in Clarke County?

Yes	14.2%
No	85.8%

**Where do you get information about Athens-Clarke County Government? (Select all that apply)**

<b>Atlanta Journal Constitution</b>	<b>16.8%</b>
<b>Athens Banner Herald</b>	<b>71.1%</b>
<b>Flagpole</b>	<b>37.4%</b>
<b>Red &amp; Black</b>	<b>34.8%</b>
<b>Online Athens</b>	<b>34.2%</b>
<b>Athens-Clarke County Government websites</b>	<b>26.2%</b>
<b>Other internet sites</b>	<b>8.9%</b>
<b>Local television news (network affiliates)</b>	<b>30.8%</b>
<b>Government Channel 7 on television</b>	<b>26.6%</b>
<b>Local radio programs</b>	<b>30.4%</b>
<b>Inserts in your water bill</b>	<b>30.6%</b>
<b>Word of mouth</b>	<b>59.4%</b>
<b>I do not get any information about Athens-Clarke County government</b>	<b>2.7%</b>

**Do you own your own home?**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>49.1%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>50.9%</b>

**If "yes," how would you rate the property taxes in Athens-Clarke County?**

<b>Extremely high</b>	<b>28.6%</b>
<b>Somewhat high</b>	<b>44.9%</b>
<b>Neither high nor low</b>	<b>24.1%</b>
<b>Somewhat low</b>	<b>1.2%</b>
<b>Extremely low</b>	<b>1.2%</b>

## ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARENT SURVEY ANNOTATED QUESTIONNAIRE

11,000 surveys were sent home with elementary public school students; 331 were returned to CVIOG for analysis. These surveys were distributed and collected by the schools. At least 2 completed surveys were obtained from 11 different schools, with one school returning 66 completed survey forms.

What do you see as the three most important issues facing Athens-Clarke County today? (Asked open-ended)

	Percentage of respondents who listed issue	Percentage of respondents who listed issue as most important
Poverty	15	25
Sprawl/overcrowding	7	19
Education	17	44
Traffic/transportation	4	16
Crime	12	31
Jobs	13	34
Housing/homelessness	3	18
Health care	< .5	3
Taxes/tax base	1	4
Environment/green space	1	4
Athens-Clarke County government	1	2
Immigration issues	1	3
Problems with the University of Georgia	< .5	1
Other	9	30

What do you like best about Athens-Clarke County? (Asked open-ended)

Downtown/restaurants/entertainment	32
Size/small town/quiet town	33
UGA	11
Diversity/people	19
Climate/green/environment/location	15
Cost of living/economy	6
Low crime/safe	2
Politics	2
History	1
Home	2
Transit system	4
Nothing	2
Other	15

Generally speaking, would you say things in Athens-Clarke County are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

Right direction	37.5%
Wrong track	18.2%
Not sure	44.3%

How would you characterize the rate of commercial growth in Athens-Clarke County today?

Too much growth	32.5%
About the right amount of growth	52.2%
Too little growth	15.3%

What type of development would you like to attract to Athens-Clarke County? (Select all that apply)

Industrial	30.7%
Large retail	25.7%
Small retail	27.2%
Technical and medical industry	57.6%
Environmentally friendly businesses	61.6%
No development	6.2%

How affordable or unaffordable is the cost of housing in Athens-Clarke County?

Extremely affordable	5.3%
Somewhat affordable	43.9%
Somewhat unaffordable	34.7%
Extremely unaffordable	16.1%

Where do you think Athens-Clarke County should concentrate its resources in providing safe and efficient transportation? (Select all that apply)

Improve and maintain local roads	59.1%
Road widening	30.5%
Bike lanes and bike paths	38.7%
Bus and transit services	59.1%
Pedestrian facilities	33.5%
Transportation for persons with disabilities	35.7%

What do you see as the main barrier in Athens-Clarke County to the unemployed finding and holding jobs?

A lack of entry level jobs	33.0%
A lack of day care for children	14.6%
A lack of senior citizen care for family	1.0%
A lack of transportation	8.7%
A lack of specific job skills and abilities	30.1%
A lack of personal organizational skills, such as showing up on time	12.6%

What is your favorite activity to do in Athens's parks and cultural facilities? (Asked open-ended)

Walking	22
Playing sports	13
Running	< .5
Viewing art	8
Viewing nature	10
Picnics/cookouts/family gatherings	11
Bringing pets	1
Hiking	6
Bringing kids	19
Botanical garden	2
Biking	2
Classic Center	-
Other	3

Is there any cultural or recreational activity you would like to do but cannot do because there is no public space or support for it?

Yes	26.9%
No	73.1%

If you answered yes, please list that activity (Asked open-ended)

Outdoor concerts	10
Golf	3
Mountain biking	-
Rollerblading	4
Biking (generic)	9
Water sports (including fishing and swimming)	6
Dancing	3
Horseback riding	1
Climbing	1
Dog park	1
Ice skating	4
Other	54

To improve the quality of the Athens-Clarke County downtown area, would you favor an increase or decrease in any of the following?

	Parking structures	Retail shops	Bars	Restaurants	Efforts to improve the look
Increase	55.9%	44.4%	4.8%	43.7%	68.2%
Keep the same	39.0%	51.3%	39.7%	54.7%	29.9%
Decrease	5.1%	4.3%	55.5%	1.6%	1.9%

Please rate the Athens-Clarke County community on each of the following

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
Athens-Clarke County as an overall place to live	20.5%	53.4%	22.0%	1.6%	2.5%
The general quality of K-12 education in Clarke County Public Schools	14.9%	41.8%	28.1%	12.1%	3.1%
Economic conditions in Athens-Clarke County	2.2%	21.2%	51.4%	18.3%	6.9%
Efforts to attract new businesses to the community	3.1%	20.0%	41.4%	14.3%	21.2%
Efforts to protect the environment	3.5%	30.3%	37.5%	16.1%	12.6%
The quality of roads	2.5%	42.8%	42.2%	11.3%	1.2%
The quality of sidewalks	2.2%	36.7%	40.1%	19.4%	1.6%
The quality of bikeways	3.4%	24.1%	38.4%	21.3%	12.8%
The quality of bus service	7.2%	29.1%	33.7%	9.4%	20.6%
The quality of services at Ben Epps Airport	4.4%	19.8%	18.2%	4.1%	53.5%
The quality of public parks	14.5%	53.7%	26.2%	3.4%	2.2%
The quality of cultural facilities	11.3%	38.4%	24.5%	5.0%	20.8%
The preservation of historic resources	8.3%	38.5%	27.1%	3.2%	22.9%
The community's response to homelessness and poverty	2.2%	17.4%	29.3%	37.4%	13.7%
The quality of health care	12.6%	34.8%	32.0%	16.3%	4.3%
The accessibility of health care	10.5%	29.2%	34.5%	20.0%	5.8%
The professionalism of the police force	9.6%	34.1%	30.9%	14.6%	10.8%
The response time of the police force	7.4%	32.8%	27.6%	10.8%	21.4%
The services of the fire department	17.6%	38.8%	11.0%	0.9%	31.7%
The trash collection services	10.0%	48.4%	21.0%	10.0%	10.6%
Recycling services	14.2%	43.8%	18.5%	6.8%	16.7%
The services of Animal Control	6.9%	30.9%	18.1%	9.7%	34.4%
The quality of service at the Athens Regional Library	33.3%	46.3%	12.1%	0.9%	7.4%



Please rate the Athens-Clarke County community on each of the following (continued)

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
The overall facilities at the Athens Regional Library	30.3%	49.0%	13.0%	1.2%	6.5%
The relationship between Athens-Clarke County and the University of Georgia	13.0%	34.1%	25.0%	6.5%	21.4%
The University of Georgia's efforts to reach out to the community	9.9%	26.9%	29.5%	16.1%	17.6%

Please indicate how important each of the following is to you

	Extremely Important	Somewhat Important	Not Too Important	Not at All Important	Unsure
Economy	72.1%	23.5%	1.2%	0.0%	3.2%
Employment and workforce	81.5%	16.0%	0.9%	0.7%	0.9%
Schools	96.9%	1.9%	0.6%	0.3%	0.3%
Poverty	71.8%	23.8%	2.8%	0.7%	0.9%
Homelessness	65.1%	25.4%	6.0%	1.6%	1.9%
Crime	80.8%	15.1%	1.9%	1.3%	0.9%
Transportation	44.6%	39.3%	13.6%	0.3%	2.2%
Environmental issues	50.8%	39.8%	6.0%	1.2%	2.2%
Historic preservation	22.2%	51.4%	18.7%	2.9%	4.8%
Relations with the University of Georgia	26.6%	44.3%	18.3%	5.4%	5.4%
Zoning issues in residential areas	43.4%	37.7%	10.1%	3.1%	5.7%
Zoning issues in business areas	26.5%	43.2%	19.9%	4.1%	6.3%
Property tax rates	54.4%	25.8%	11.0%	2.2%	6.6%
Sales tax rates	52.7%	34.1%	9.4%	1.9%	1.9%

Please select how likely you are to support or oppose each of the following policy suggestions for Athens-Clarke County

	Strongly Support	Mildly Support	Mildly Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Unsure
Collaborating with other cities and counties in Northeast Georgia to develop a regional economy	37.2%	38.2%	4.1%	2.8%	17.7%
Increasing efforts to attract new businesses	46.4%	35.0%	9.8%	1.9%	6.9%
Developing more mixed-use developments (neighborhoods that are zoned for both commercial and residential use)	31.9%	30.9%	19.8%	7.6%	9.8%

Please select how likely you are to support or oppose each of the following policy suggestions for Athens-Clarke County (continued)

	Strongly Support	Mildly Support	Mildly Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Unsure
Increasing marketing of Athens-Clarke County as a convention and tourist destination	29.1%	42.8%	14.0%	5.0%	9.1%
Limiting the size of new homes built in existing neighborhoods	31.4%	34.3%	15.7%	9.2%	9.4%
Requiring new homes to fit into the style of existing homes in established neighborhoods	36.0%	33.1%	15.1%	7.3%	8.5%
Allowing property owners to convert or add to their houses to create rental apartments	17.3%	31.4%	23.3%	16.7%	11.3%
Relaxing the limits on the number of unrelated individuals who can live in one unit of housing	22.6%	30.5%	17.9%	21.4%	7.5%
Creating commuter rail service between Athens and Atlanta	62.7%	24.1%	3.8%	3.4%	6.0%
Expand avenues for parents and community members to be involved in student's learning in the Clarke County Public Schools	76.7%	17.3%	1.6%	0.9%	3.5%
Having Athens-Clarke County Government provide more job training opportunities for residents	70.5%	22.9%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%
Having Athens-Clarke County Government and local businesses offer more services in Spanish	24.2%	37.4%	12.6%	17.0%	8.8%

Are there any children in your household who attend public school (K-12) in Clarke County?

Yes	94.7%
No	5.3%

Where do you get information about Athens-Clarke County Government? (Select all that apply)

Atlanta Journal Constitution	4.8%
Athens Banner Herald	63.5%
Flagpole	20.6%
Red & Black	11.6%
Online Athens	33.5%
Athens-Clarke County Government websites	20.6%
Other internet sites	4.2%
Local television news (network affiliates)	37.1%
Government Channel 7 on television	26.1%
Local radio programs	30.3%
Inserts in your water bill	22.9%
Word of mouth	37.4%
I do not get any information about Athens-Clarke County government	2.3%

**Do you own your own home?**

Yes	49.4%
No	50.6%

**If "yes," how would you rate the property taxes in Athens-Clarke County?**

Extremely high	30.5%
Somewhat high	43.9%
Neither high nor low	20.7%
Somewhat low	4.9%
Extremely low	0.0%

## SPANISH LANGUAGE SURVEY ANNOTATED QUESTIONNAIRE

The survey was translated into Spanish and distributed by the schools to Spanish-speaking households independent of the CVIOG research team's efforts. One-hundred and fourteen were returned and entered into the web site for data collection by ACC employees.<sup>2</sup>

**What do you see as the three most important issues facing Athens-Clarke County today? (Asked open-ended)**

	Percentage of respondents who listed issue	Percentage of respondents who listed issue as most important
Poverty	3.5%	0.9%
Sprawl/overcrowding	1.8%	0.9%
Education	36.0%	23.7%
Traffic/transportation	9.6%	1.8%
Crime	42.1%	21.1%
Jobs	30.7%	7.0%
Housing/homelessness	1.8%	1.8%
Health care	17.5%	4.4%
Taxes/tax base	0.9%	0.9%
Environment/green space	7.9%	0.0%
Athens-Clarke County government	0.0%	0.0%
Downtown	0.0%	0.0%
Historic preservation	0.0%	0.0%
Immigration issues	14.0%	6.1%
Problems with the University of Georgia	0.0%	0.0%
Other	25.4%	3.5%

**What do you like best about Athens-Clarke County? (Asked open-ended)**

Downtown/restaurants/entertainment	1.8%
Size/small town/quiet town	18.4%
UGA	1.8%
Diversity/people	3.5%
Climate/green/environment/location	28.1%
Cost of living/economy	5.3%
Low crime/safe	15.8%
Politics	0.0%
Transit system	0.0%
Nothing	0.0%
Other	49.1%

<sup>2</sup> Translation of the survey instrument and responses were done outside of the purview of CVIOG's Survey Research Unit.

Generally speaking, would you say things in Athens-Clarke County are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

Right direction	56.4%
Wrong track	13.6%
Not sure	30.0%

How would you characterize the rate of commercial growth in Athens-Clarke County today?

Too much growth	26.6%
About the right amount of growth	62.4%
Too little growth	11.0%

What type of development would you like to attract to Athens-Clarke County? (Select all that apply)

Industrial	50.0%
Large retail	41.2%
Small retail	14.9%
Technical and medical industry	55.3%
Environmentally friendly businesses	51.8%
No development	0.9%

How affordable or unaffordable is the cost of housing in Athens-Clarke County?

Extremely affordable	8.7%
Somewhat affordable	65.4%
Somewhat unaffordable	22.1%
Extremely unaffordable	3.8%

Where do you think Athens-Clarke County should concentrate its resources in providing safe and efficient transportation? (Select all that apply)

Improve and maintain local roads	43.0%
Road widening	35.1%
Bike lanes and bike paths	32.5%
Bus and transit services	55.3%
Pedestrian facilities	38.6%
Transportation for persons with disabilities	50.0%

What do you see as the main barrier in Athens-Clarke County to the unemployed finding and holding jobs?

A lack of entry level jobs	53.9%
A lack of day care for children	19.2%
A lack of senior citizen care for family	1.0%
A lack of transportation	14.4%
A lack of specific job skills and abilities	9.6%
A lack of personal organizational skills, such as showing up on time	1.9%

What is your favorite activity to do in Athens's parks and cultural facilities? (Asked open-ended)

Walking	24.6%
Playing sports	27.2%
Running	1.8%
Viewing art	9.2%
Viewing nature	7.0%
Picnics/cookouts/family gatherings	6.1%
Bringing pets	0.0%
Hiking	0.0%
Bringing kids	35.1%
Botanical garden	5.3%
Biking	6.1%
Classic Center	0.0%
Other	11.4%

Is there any cultural or recreational activity you would like to do but cannot do because there is no public space or support for it?

Yes	32.6%
No	67.4%

If you answered yes, please list that activity (Asked open-ended)

Outdoor concerts	0.0%
Golf	0.0%
Mountain biking	0.0%
Rollerblading	4.2%
Biking (generic)	4.2%
Water sports (including fishing and swimming)	8.3%
Dancing	0.0%
Horseback riding	4.2%
Climbing	0.0%
Dog park	0.0%
Ice skating	0.0%
Other	79.2%

To improve the quality of the Athens-Clarke County downtown area, would you favor an increase or decrease in any of the following?

	Parking structures	Retail shops	Bars	Restaurants	Efforts to improve the look
Increase	82.1%	44.9%	9.0%	49.4%	72.7%
Keep the same	16.8%	50.0%	34.6%	46.9%	25.8%
Decrease	1.1%	5.1%	56.4%	3.7%	1.5%

Please rate the Athens-Clarke County community on each of the following

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
Athens-Clarke County as an overall place to live	31.1%	53.8%	14.2%	0.0%	0.9%
The general quality of K-12 education in Clarke County Public Schools	40.2%	43.0%	5.6%	2.8%	8.4%
Economic conditions in Athens-Clarke County	6.7%	37.1%	38.1%	9.5%	8.6%
Efforts to attract new businesses to the community	10.5%	40.4%	14.4%	13.5%	21.2%
Efforts to protect the environment	21.5%	43.0%	15.0%	8.4%	12.1%
The quality of roads	13.5%	53.8%	20.2%	8.7%	3.8%
The quality of sidewalks	9.5%	35.3%	20.0%	20.0%	15.2%
The quality of bikeways	4.8%	27.2%	23.3%	31.1%	13.6%
The quality of bus service	12.1%	31.3%	17.2%	26.3%	13.1%
The quality of services at Ben Epps Airport	8.9%	21.8%	8.9%	3.0%	57.4%
The quality of public parks	20.4%	51.9%	11.1%	10.2%	6.4%
The quality of cultural facilities	16.3%	44.2%	13.5%	6.8%	19.2%
The preservation of historic resources	12.7%	45.1%	9.8%	6.9%	25.5%
The community's response to homelessness and poverty	5.6%	13.9%	23.1%	22.2%	35.2%
The quality of health care	16.7%	39.8%	14.8%	21.3%	7.4%
The accessibility of health care	10.6%	35.6%	17.3%	25.0%	11.5%
The professionalism of the police force	20.9%	44.8%	18.1%	4.8%	11.4%
The response time of the police force	26.2%	44.7%	11.7%	5.8%	11.6%
The services of the fire department	35.8%	39.6%	7.5%	2.9%	14.2%
The trash collection services	15.9%	56.1%	17.7%	4.7%	5.6%
Recycling services	11.2%	48.7%	11.2%	6.5%	22.4%
The services of Animal Control	16.7%	36.3%	13.7%	3.9%	29.4%
The quality of service at the Athens Regional Library	38.0%	41.0%	7.6%	1.0%	12.4%

Please rate the Athens-Clarke County community on each of the following (continued)

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
The overall facilities at the Athens Regional Library	32.7%	45.8%	7.5%	0.9%	13.1%
The relationship between Athens-Clarke County and the University of Georgia	18.9%	33.0%	7.5%	1.9%	38.7%
The University of Georgia's efforts to reach out to the community	22.1%	33.7%	4.8%	5.7%	33.7%

Please indicate how important each of the following is to you

	Extremely Important	Somewhat Important	Not Too Important	Not at All Important	Unsure
Economy	65.5%	28.8%	1.9%	0.0%	3.8%
Employment and workforce	73.8%	21.4%	1.9%	0.0%	2.9%
Schools	77.9%	19.2%	1.0%	0.0%	1.9%
Poverty	72.6%	20.6%	3.9%	0.0%	2.9%
Homelessness	66.1%	25.2%	1.9%	0.0%	6.8%
Crime	76.2%	10.9%	1.0%	1.0%	10.9%
Transportation	54.3%	39.0%	2.9%	0.0%	3.8%
Environmental issues	48.0%	37.3%	3.9%	0.0%	10.8%
Historic preservation	28.5%	54.9%	3.9%	2.9%	9.8%
Relations with the University of Georgia	33.0%	42.8%	5.8%	1.9%	16.5%
Zoning issues in residential areas	21.2%	35.6%	13.5%	0.9%	28.8%
Zoning issues in business areas	20.2%	41.4%	10.1%	3.0%	25.3%
Property tax rates	32.0%	35.0%	12.6%	0.0%	20.4%
Sales tax rates	28.0%	31.0%	17.0%	0.0%	24.0%

Please select how likely you are to support or oppose each of the following policy suggestions for Athens-Clarke County

	Strongly Support	Mildly Support	Mildly Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Unsure
Collaborating with other cities and counties in Northeast Georgia to develop a regional economy	52.0%	22.0%	2.0%	0.0%	24.0%
Increasing efforts to attract new businesses	58.3%	22.8%	2.0%	2.0%	14.9%
Developing more mixed-use developments (neighborhoods that are zoned for both commercial and residential use)	41.4%	33.3%	6.1%	1.0%	18.2%



Please select how likely you are to support or oppose each of the following policy suggestions for Athens-Clarke County (continued)

	Strongly Support	Mildly Support	Mildly Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Unsure
Increasing marketing of Athens-Clarke County as a convention and tourist destination	52.5%	20.8%	4.9%	1.0%	20.8%
Limiting the size of new homes built in existing neighborhoods	19.4%	26.5%	10.2%	5.1%	38.8%
Requiring new homes to fit into the style of existing homes in established neighborhoods	25.3%	29.3%	8.1%	3.0%	34.3%
Allowing property owners to convert or add to their houses to create rental apartments	35.6%	28.7%	5.0%	7.9%	22.8%
Relaxing the limits on the number of unrelated individuals who can live in one unit of housing	26.8%	24.8%	11.3%	10.3%	26.8%
Creating commuter rail service between Athens and Atlanta	46.4%	16.2%	5.1%	2.0%	30.3%
Expand avenues for parents and community members to be involved in student's learning in the Clarke County Public Schools	71.3%	16.8%	1.0%	0.0%	10.9%
Having Athens-Clarke County Government provide more job training opportunities for residents	78.0%	10.0%	0.0%	1.0%	11.0%
Having Athens-Clarke County Government and local businesses offer more services in Spanish	74.7%	16.2%	0.0%	1.0%	8.1%

Are there any children in your household who attend public school (K-12) in Clarke County?

Yes	92.8%
No	7.2%

Where do you get information about Athens-Clarke County Government? (Select all that apply)

Atlanta Journal Constitution	10.5%
Athens Banner Herald	32.5%
Flagpole	5.3%
Red & Black	1.8%
Online Athens	6.1%
Athens-Clarke County Government websites	6.1%
Other internet sites	2.6%
Local television news (network affiliates)	48.2%
Government Channel 7 on television	24.6%
Local radio programs	31.6%
Inserts in your water bill	8.8%
Word of mouth	36.8%
I do not get any information about Athens-Clarke County government	13.2%

**Do you own your own home?**

Yes	31.3%
No	68.7%

**If "yes," how would you rate the property taxes in Athens-Clarke County?**

Extremely high	41.9%
Somewhat high	25.8%
Neither high nor low	32.3%
Somewhat low	0.0%
Extremely low	0.0%

## OPEN WEB SURVEY ANNOTATED QUESTIONNAIRE

The survey was posted on the CVIOG Survey Research Unit's web site. Links from the county's web site brought respondents to the survey. The survey did not require passwords or receipt of cookies, and respondents were not necessarily restricted from responding more than once (although analysis of results suggests that multiple responses were rare). Overall, 1,179 web respondents came to the survey, although some did not complete the survey entirely; missing data for any survey item is omitted from the tables below.

**What do you see as the three most important issues facing Athens-Clarke County today? (Asked open-ended)**

	Percentage of respondents who listed issue	Percentage of respondents who listed issue as most important
Poverty	19.4%	11.5%
Sprawl/overcrowding	35.1%	15.4%
Education	23.5%	9.0%
Traffic/transportation	23.9%	5.5%
Crime	6.0%	1.4%
Jobs	19.1%	7.0%
Housing/homelessness	11.7%	3.1%
Health care	1.5%	0.3%
Taxes/tax base	6.9%	2.6%
Environment/green space	19.4%	4.7%
Athens-Clarke County government	4.3%	0.9%
Downtown	1.4%	0.1%
Historic preservation	1.0%	0.0%
Immigration issues	0.6%	0.1%
Problems with the University of Georgia	2.4%	0.7%
Other	13.2%	3.1%

**What do you like best about Athens-Clarke County? (Asked open-ended)**

Downtown/restaurants/entertainment	29.3%
Size/small town/quiet town	19.3%
UGA	10.2%
Diversity/people	24.0%
Climate/green/environment/location	18.6%
Cost of living/economy	3.7%
Low crime/safe	5.0%
Politics	6.2%
History	2.2%
Home	0.8%

**What do you like best about Athens-Clarke County? (continued) (Asked open-ended)**

Transit system	0.3%
Nothing	0.2%
Other	8.8%

**Generally speaking, would you say things in Athens-Clarke County are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?**

Right direction	40.7%
Wrong track	24.6%
Not sure	34.7%

**How would you characterize the rate of commercial growth in Athens-Clarke County today?**

Too much growth	38.0%
About the right amount of growth	44.5%
Too little growth	17.5%

**What type of development would you like to attract to Athens-Clarke County? (Select all that apply)**

Industrial	17.0%
Large retail	11.3%
Small retail	39.9%
Technical and medical industry	48.1%
Environmentally friendly businesses	55.6%
No development	2.5%

**How affordable or unaffordable is the cost of housing in Athens-Clarke County?**

Extremely affordable	11.5%
Somewhat affordable	52.2%
Somewhat unaffordable	27.5%
Extremely unaffordable	8.8%

**Where do you think Athens-Clarke County should concentrate its resources in providing safe and efficient transportation? (Select all that apply)**

Improve and maintain local roads	40.0%
Road widening	15.9%
Bike lanes and bike paths	40.6%
Bus and transit services	46.6%
Pedestrian facilities	39.4%
Transportation for persons with disabilities	22.9%

**What do you see as the main barrier in Athens-Clarke County to the unemployed finding and holding jobs?**

A lack of entry level jobs	20.3%
A lack of day care for children	8.0%
A lack of senior citizen care for family	0.3%
A lack of transportation	10.0%
A lack of specific job skills and abilities	40.2%
A lack of personal organizational skills, such as showing up on time	21.2%

**What is your favorite activity to do in Athens's parks and cultural facilities? (Asked open-ended)**

Walking	17.2%
Playing sports	6.4%
Running	2.2%
Viewing art	9.3%
Viewing nature	3.7%
Picnics/cookouts/family gatherings	1.2%
Bringing pets	4.6%
Hiking	5.3%
Bringing kids	6.5%
Botanical garden	1.4%
Biking	6.3%
Classic Center	1.0%
Other	6.1%

**Is there any cultural or recreational activity you would like to do but cannot do because there is no public space or support for it?**

Yes	38.5%
No	61.5%

**If you answered yes, please list that activity (Asked open-ended)**

Outdoor concerts	4.6%
Golf	3.2%
Mountain biking	17.7%
Rollerblading	2.8%
Biking (generic)	20.2%
Water sports (including fishing and swimming)	12.1%
Dancing	0.7%
Horseback riding	1.8%
Climbing	0.7%
Dog park	2.1%

If you answered yes, please list that activity (continued) (Asked open-ended)

Ice skating	2.1%
Other	31.6%

To improve the quality of the Athens-Clarke County downtown area, would you favor an increase or decrease in any of the following?

	Parking structures	Retail shops	Bars	Restaurants	Efforts to improve the look
Increase	38.8%	62.0%	3.4%	53.0%	73.3%
Keep the same	55.4%	37.2%	41.9%	46.2%	24.7%
Decrease	5.8%	0.8%	54.7%	0.8%	2.0%

Please rate the Athens-Clarke County community on each of the following

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
Athens-Clarke County as an overall place to live	42.1%	51.6%	6.1%	0.1%	0.1%
The general quality of K-12 education in Clarke County Public Schools	1.7%	16.4%	32.2%	29.8%	19.9%
Economic conditions in Athens-Clarke County	1.5%	28.1%	48.0%	19.8%	2.6%
Efforts to attract new businesses to the community	2.4%	23.6%	28.5%	22.8%	22.7%
Efforts to protect the environment	8.2%	39.6%	34.1%	13.5%	4.6%
The quality of roads	6.0%	61.1%	27.1%	5.2%	0.6%
The quality of sidewalks	4.9%	39.4%	37.0%	17.5%	1.2%
The quality of bikeways	5.1%	22.1%	28.6%	31.5%	12.7%
The quality of bus service	5.7%	25.0%	31.5%	14.9%	22.9%
The quality of services at Ben Epps Airport	5.3%	19.7%	16.1%	10.2%	48.7%
The quality of public parks	19.8%	53.6%	19.6%	3.8%	3.2%
The quality of cultural facilities	33.0%	49.8%	10.5%	1.5%	5.2%
The preservation of historic resources	19.4%	49.7%	18.9%	2.8%	9.2%
The community's response to homelessness and poverty	5.9%	30.9%	34.4%	19.4%	9.4%
The quality of health care	27.6%	46.0%	14.4%	3.7%	8.3%
The accessibility of health care	18.1%	37.7%	24.0%	9.5%	10.7%
The professionalism of the police force	13.3%	44.0%	17.2%	7.5%	18.0%
The response time of the police force	11.4%	33.8%	12.1%	4.7%	38.0%
The services of the fire department	20.7%	33.9%	2.4%	0.3%	42.7%
The trash collection services	17.7%	43.4%	14.3%	6.1%	18.5%
Recycling services	28.4%	42.7%	15.2%	6.7%	7.0%

Please rate the Athens-Clarke County community on each of the following (continued)

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
The services of Animal Control	10.2%	31.4%	12.8%	4.7%	40.9%
The quality of service at the Athens Regional Library	39.9%	41.6%	5.3%	1.3%	11.9%
The overall facilities at the Athens Regional Library	30.8%	45.0%	9.2%	2.8%	12.2%
The relationship between Athens-Clarke County and the University of Georgia	7.7%	45.8%	27.5%	8.9%	10.1%
The University of Georgia's efforts to reach out to the community	9.2%	34.9%	29.1%	19.8%	7.0%

Please indicate how important each of the following is to you

	Extremely Important	Somewhat Important	Not Too Important	Not at All Important	Unsure
Economy	60.8%	36.7%	2.4%	0.0%	0.1%
Employment and workforce	59.2%	36.8%	3.8%	0.3%	0.3%
Schools	76.7%	15.2%	4.7%	2.2%	1.2%
Poverty	53.5%	35.7%	8.2%	1.9%	0.7%
Homelessness	44.7%	39.0%	12.3%	3.7%	0.3%
Crime	68.5%	26.7%	4.1%	0.4%	0.3%
Transportation	43.3%	42.9%	11.7%	1.4%	0.7%
Environmental issues	67.9%	26.1%	4.1%	1.9%	0.0%
Historic preservation	36.6%	44.4%	15.7%	3.0%	0.3%
Relations with the University of Georgia	33.2%	50.9%	12.9%	2.6%	0.4%
Zoning issues in residential areas	64.6%	24.6%	7.5%	1.8%	1.5%
Zoning issues in business areas	37.7%	42.8%	14.5%	2.7%	2.3%
Property tax rates	49.3%	33.1%	13.0%	2.6%	2.0%
Sales tax rates	35.4%	41.3%	18.6%	3.5%	1.2%

Please select how likely you are to support or oppose each of the following policy suggestions for Athens-Clarke County

	Strongly Support	Mildly Support	Mildly Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Unsure
Collaborating with other cities and counties in Northeast Georgia to develop a regional economy	51.4%	37.1%	3.6%	1.1%	6.8%
Increasing efforts to attract new businesses	51.9%	37.5%	5.8%	1.8%	3.0%
Developing more mixed-use developments (neighborhoods that are zoned for both commercial and residential use)	38.2%	33.0%	15.5%	9.2%	4.1%
Increasing marketing of Athens-Clarke County as a convention and tourist destination	39.5%	42.1%	13.2%	3.6%	1.6%
Limiting the size of new homes built in existing neighborhoods	41.1%	31.0%	13.0%	9.7%	5.2%
Requiring new homes to fit into the style of existing homes in established neighborhoods	47.4%	28.9%	13.6%	7.9%	2.2%
Allowing property owners to convert or add to their houses to create rental apartments	12.9%	26.8%	28.4%	27.5%	4.4%
Relaxing the limits on the number of unrelated individuals who can live in one unit of housing	24.9%	23.8%	18.6%	30.1%	2.6%
Creating commuter rail service between Athens and Atlanta	65.3%	20.0%	5.6%	7.2%	1.9%
Expand avenues for parents and community members to be involved in student's learning in the Clarke County Public Schools	62.4%	26.3%	1.9%	0.7%	8.7%
Having Athens-Clarke County Government provide more job training opportunities for residents	42.8%	37.8%	10.8%	5.0%	3.6%
Having Athens-Clarke County Government and local businesses offer more services in Spanish	22.2%	29.8%	18.2%	24.7%	5.1%

Are there any children in your household who attend public school (K-12) in Clarke County?

Yes	13.0%
No	87.0%



**Where do you get information about Athens-Clarke County Government? (Select all that apply)**

<b>Atlanta Journal Constitution</b>	<b>14.8%</b>
<b>Athens Banner Herald</b>	<b>51.5%</b>
<b>Flagpole</b>	<b>43.3%</b>
<b>Red &amp; Black</b>	<b>18.2%</b>
<b>Online Athens</b>	<b>38.4%</b>
<b>Athens-Clarke County Government websites</b>	<b>34.9%</b>
<b>Other internet sites</b>	<b>11.2%</b>
<b>Local television news (network affiliates)</b>	<b>15.2%</b>
<b>Government Channel 7 on television</b>	<b>20.1%</b>
<b>Local radio programs</b>	<b>33.0%</b>
<b>Inserts in your water bill</b>	<b>26.5%</b>
<b>Word of mouth</b>	<b>43.5%</b>
<b>I do not get any information about Athens-Clarke County government</b>	<b>0.3%</b>

**Do you own your own home?**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>83.7%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>16.3%</b>

**If "yes," how would you rate the property taxes in Athens-Clarke County?**

<b>Extremely high</b>	<b>14.0%</b>
<b>Somewhat high</b>	<b>40.6%</b>
<b>Neither high nor low</b>	<b>38.9%</b>
<b>Somewhat low</b>	<b>4.9%</b>
<b>Extremely low</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

### SURVEY INSERT IN NEWSPAPER ANNOTATED QUESTIONNAIRE

These data represent surveys returned from the "Shaping Your Community" insert that was delivered with the Sunday, April 22, 2007 Banner Herald. A total of 13,880 Inserts went out into the community, and 140 were completed and returned to the Athens-Clarke County Planning Department.

What do you see as the three most important issues facing Athens-Clarke County today? **(Asked open-ended)**

	Percentage of respondents who listed issue	Percentage of respondents who listed issue as most important
Poverty	18.0%	9.4%
Sprawl/overcrowding	41.7%	18.7%
Education	31.7%	12.2%
Traffic/transportation	27.3%	10.1%
Crime	11.5%	3.6%
Jobs	28.8%	8.6%
Housing/homelessness	14.4%	2.2%
Health care	3.6%	0.7%
Taxes/tax base	16.5%	6.5%
Environment/green space	23.7%	7.9%
Athens-Clarke County government	6.5%	3.6%
Downtown	2.2%	0.0%
Historic preservation	0.0%	0.0%
Immigration issues	5.8%	2.2%
Problems with the University of Georgia	2.9%	0.0%
Other	19.4%	4.3%

What do you like best about Athens-Clarke County? **(Asked open-ended)**

Downtown/restaurants/entertainment	33.8%
Size/small town/quiet town	37.4%
UGA	16.5%
Diversity/people	25.9%
Climate/green/environment/location	28.1%
Cost of living/economy	1.4%
Low crime/safe	0.7%
Politics	5.0%
History	2.2%
Home	0.7%
Transit system	1.4%
Nothing	1.4%
Other	11.5%

Generally speaking, would you say things in Athens-Clarke County are heading in the right direction, or are they off on the wrong track?

Right direction	47.7%
Wrong track	31.2%
Not sure	21.1%

How would you characterize the rate of commercial growth in Athens-Clarke County today?

Too much growth	26.8%
About the right amount of growth	53.7%
Too little growth	19.5%

What type of development would you like to attract to Athens-Clarke County? (Select all that apply)

Industrial	30.7%
Large retail	18.6%
Small retail	35.7%
Technical and medical industry	67.1%
Environmentally friendly businesses	70.0%
No development	8.6%

How affordable or unaffordable is the cost of housing in Athens-Clarke County?

Extremely affordable	4.1%
Somewhat affordable	51.2%
Somewhat unaffordable	31.7%
Extremely unaffordable	13.0%

Where do you think Athens-Clarke County should concentrate its resources in providing safe and efficient transportation? (Select all that apply)

Improve and maintain local roads	62.9%
Road widening	22.9%
Bike lanes and bike paths	34.3%
Bus and transit services	51.4%
Pedestrian facilities	45.0%
Transportation for persons with disabilities	30.7%

**What do you see as the main barrier in Athens-Clarke County to the unemployed finding and holding jobs?**

A lack of entry level jobs	16.3%
A lack of day care for children	9.4%
A lack of senior citizen care for family	0.9%
A lack of transportation	8.5%
A lack of specific job skills and abilities	35.0%
A lack of personal organizational skills, such as showing up on time	29.9%

**What is your favorite activity to do in Athens's parks and cultural facilities? (Asked open-ended)**

Walking	28.1%
Playing sports	11.5%
Running	0.7%
Viewing art	18.7%
Viewing nature	5.8%
Picnics/cookouts/family gatherings	0.7%
Bringing pets	2.2%
Hiking	4.3%
Bringing kids	10.1%
Botanical garden	0.7%
Biking	3.6%
Classic Center	2.9%
Other	10.8%

**Is there any cultural or recreational activity you would like to do but cannot do because there is no public space or support for it?**

Yes	26.3%
No	73.7%

If you answered yes, please list that activity (Asked open-ended)

Outdoor concerts	11.1%
Golf	3.7%
Mountain biking	3.7%
Rollerblading	0.0%
Biking (generic)	11.1%
Water sports (including fishing and swimming)	14.8%
Dancing	0.0%
Horseback riding	0.0%
Climbing	0.0%
Dog park	0.0%
Ice skating	3.7%
Other	51.9%

To improve the quality of the Athens-Clarke County downtown area, would you favor an increase or decrease in any of the following?

	Parking structures	Retail shops	Bars	Restaurants	Efforts to improve the look
Increase	49.6%	61.8%	2.5%	40.9%	69.0%
Keep the same	46.0%	36.5%	20.8%	54.8%	29.3%
Decrease	4.4%	1.7%	76.7%	4.3%	1.7%

Please rate the Athens-Clarke County community on each of the following

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
Athens-Clarke County as an overall place to live	32.0%	54.1%	11.5%	1.6%	0.8%
The general quality of K-12 education in Clarke County Public Schools	2.4%	21.6%	36.8%	23.2%	16.0%
Economic conditions in Athens-Clarke County	2.5%	33.1%	50.4%	9.9%	4.1%
Efforts to attract new businesses to the community	2.4%	25.6%	36.0%	20.0%	16.0%
Efforts to protect the environment	9.1%	37.2%	38.0%	14.9%	0.8%
The quality of roads	3.3%	51.6%	34.4%	10.7%	0.0%
The quality of sidewalks	4.8%	36.5%	35.7%	19.0%	4.0%
The quality of bikeways	5.6%	19.2%	28.8%	26.4%	20.0%
The quality of bus service	5.6%	29.0%	31.5%	9.7%	24.2%
The quality of services at Ben Epps Airport	7.2%	24.8%	24.0%	8.8%	35.2%
The quality of public parks	19.5%	57.7%	13.0%	4.1%	5.7%
The quality of cultural facilities	46.0%	35.8%	10.3%	1.6%	6.3%
The preservation of historic resources	20.2%	47.5%	19.4%	5.6%	7.3%

Please rate the Athens-Clarke County community on each of the following

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	Unsure
The community's response to homelessness and poverty	8.0%	31.2%	36.8%	18.4%	5.6%
The quality of health care	37.6%	47.2%	9.6%	2.4%	3.2%
The accessibility of health care	32.8%	36.0%	22.4%	5.6%	3.2%
The professionalism of the police force	18.3%	48.3%	18.3%	5.6%	9.5%
The response time of the police force	15.8%	36.5%	16.7%	2.4%	28.6%
The services of the fire department	30.1%	45.5%	4.9%	0.8%	18.7%
The trash collection services	21.3%	40.2%	16.5%	9.4%	12.6%
Recycling services	27.0%	41.3%	13.5%	8.7%	9.5%
The services of Animal Control	5.6%	38.7%	17.7%	7.3%	30.7%
The quality of service at the Athens Regional Library	32.8%	47.2%	4.8%	3.2%	12.0%
The overall facilities at the Athens Regional Library	25.4%	49.2%	10.3%	3.2%	11.9%
The relationship between Athens-Clarke County and the University of Georgia	4.0%	51.6%	28.2%	8.9%	7.3%
The University of Georgia's efforts to reach out to the community	7.9%	44.4%	23.9%	20.6%	3.2%

Please indicate how important each of the following is to you

	Extremely Important	Somewhat Important	Not Too Important	Not at All Important	Unsure
Economy	57.0%	39.7%	2.5%	0.0%	0.8%
Employment and workforce	53.3%	36.9%	7.4%	0.8%	1.6%
Schools	63.5%	25.4%	7.9%	2.4%	0.8%
Poverty	40.4%	41.1%	14.5%	1.6%	2.4%
Homelessness	33.3%	39.9%	17.9%	7.3%	1.6%
Crime	73.6%	22.4%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Transportation	43.3%	42.9%	11.7%	1.4%	0.7%
Environmental issues	63.7%	24.2%	10.5%	0.8%	0.8%
Historic preservation	40.0%	45.0%	11.7%	3.3%	0.0%
Relations with the University of Georgia	47.9%	44.5%	6.7%	0.0%	0.9%

Please indicate how important each of the following is to you

	Extremely Important	Somewhat Important	Not Too Important	Not at All Important	Unsure
Zoning issues in residential areas	75.8%	20.8%	2.5%	0.9%	0.0%
Zoning issues in business areas	50.4%	37.0%	8.4%	0.8%	3.4%
Property tax rates	62.3%	31.1%	5.7%	0.9%	0.0%
Sales tax rates	45.0%	41.7%	12.5%	0.8%	0.0%

Please select how likely you are to support or oppose each of the following policy suggestions for Athens-Clarke County

	Strongly Support	Mildly Support	Mildly Oppose	Strongly Oppose	Unsure
Collaborating with other cities and counties in Northeast Georgia to develop a regional economy	47.5%	37.7%	5.7%	1.6%	7.5%
Increasing efforts to attract new businesses	52.8%	33.3%	7.3%	4.1%	2.5%
Developing more mixed-use developments (neighborhoods that are zoned for both commercial and residential use)	23.0%	29.5%	22.1%	20.5%	4.9%
Increasing marketing of Athens-Clarke County as a convention and tourist destination	40.0%	43.2%	11.2%	4.0%	1.6%
Limiting the size of new homes built in existing neighborhoods	44.4%	28.2%	12.9%	12.1%	2.4%
Requiring new homes to fit into the style of existing homes in established neighborhoods	47.2%	28.0%	11.2%	12.0%	1.6%
Allowing property owners to convert or add to their houses to create rental apartments	14.0%	23.2%	25.6%	33.9%	3.3%
Relaxing the limits on the number of unrelated individuals who can live in one unit of housing	13.8%	26.0%	14.6%	43.1%	2.5%
Creating commuter rail service between Athens and Atlanta	45.9%	29.5%	8.2%	11.5%	4.9%
Expand avenues for parents and community members to be involved in student's learning in the Clarke County Public Schools	47.1%	40.3%	2.5%	1.7%	8.4%
Having Athens-Clarke County Government provide more job training opportunities for residents	36.7%	37.5%	15.8%	3.3%	6.7%
Having Athens-Clarke County Government and local businesses offer more services in Spanish	11.6%	30.6%	19.8%	34.7%	3.3%

Are there any children in your household who attend public school (K-12) in Clarke County?

Yes	14.4%
No	85.6%

**Where do you get information about Athens-Clarke County Government? (Select all that apply)**

<b>Atlanta Journal Constitution</b>	<b>15.7%</b>
<b>Athens Banner Herald</b>	<b>85.7%</b>
<b>Flagpole</b>	<b>38.6%</b>
<b>Red &amp; Black</b>	<b>18.6%</b>
<b>Online Athens</b>	<b>23.6%</b>
<b>Athens-Clarke County Government websites</b>	<b>25.7%</b>
<b>Other internet sites</b>	<b>3.6%</b>
<b>Local television news (network affiliates)</b>	<b>30.7%</b>
<b>Government Channel 7 on television</b>	<b>33.6%</b>
<b>Local radio programs</b>	<b>48.6%</b>
<b>Inserts in your water bill</b>	<b>36.4%</b>
<b>Word of mouth</b>	<b>47.9%</b>
<b>I do not get any information about Athens-Clarke County government</b>	<b>2.1%</b>

**Do you own your own home?**

<b>Yes</b>	<b>87.4%</b>
<b>No</b>	<b>12.6%</b>

**If "yes," how would you rate the property taxes in Athens-Clarke County?**

<b>Extremely high</b>	<b>33.3%</b>
<b>Somewhat high</b>	<b>36.9%</b>
<b>Neither high nor low</b>	<b>26.4%</b>
<b>Somewhat low</b>	<b>3.4%</b>
<b>Extremely low</b>	<b>0.0%</b>



The following are the images from slides presented to the Athens-Clarke County Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee on June 11, 2007.



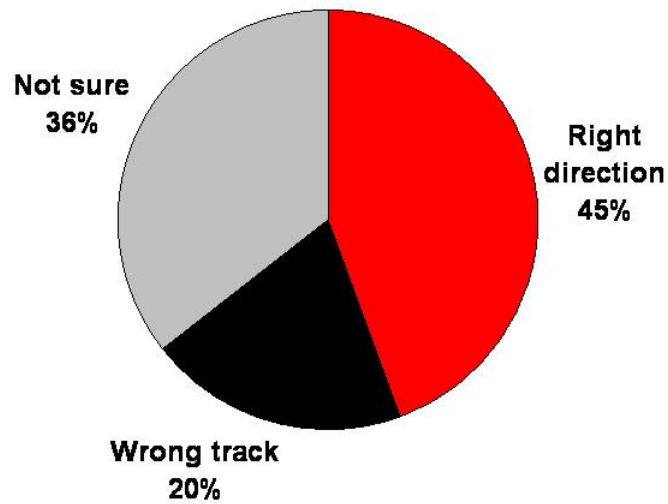
## >> What are the most important issues facing Athens-Clarke County?

	Listed as most important issue	Listed as one of three most important issues
Poverty	15%	30%
Sprawl/overcrowding	11%	25%
Education	10%	25%
Traffic/transportation	10%	28%
Crime	8%	26%
Jobs	7%	27%

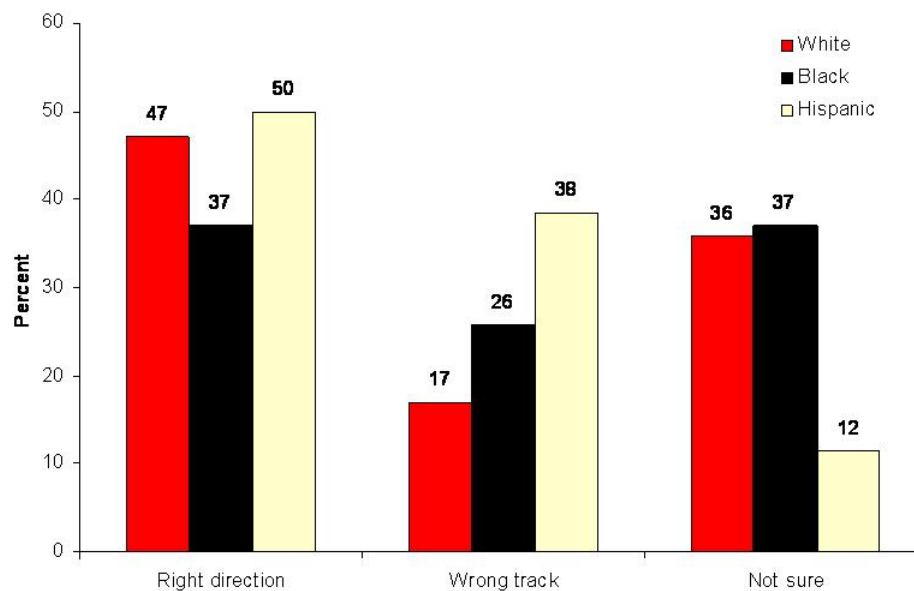
## >> What do people like best about Athens-Clarke County?

Downtown/restaurants/entertainment	47%
Size/small town/quiet town	33%
UGA	23%
Diversity/people	19%
Climate/environment/location	14%

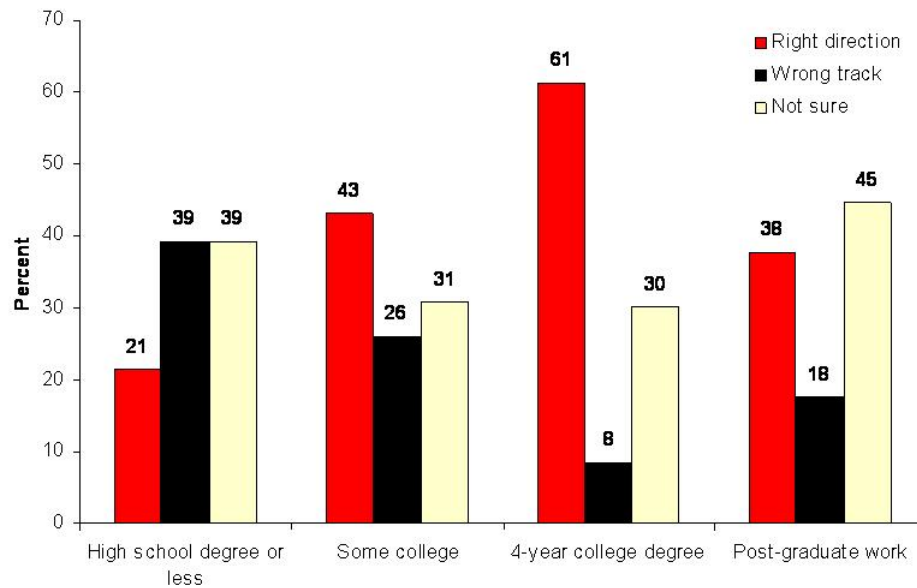
## >> Right direction or wrong track?



## >> Right direction or wrong track?



## &gt;&gt; Right direction or wrong track?



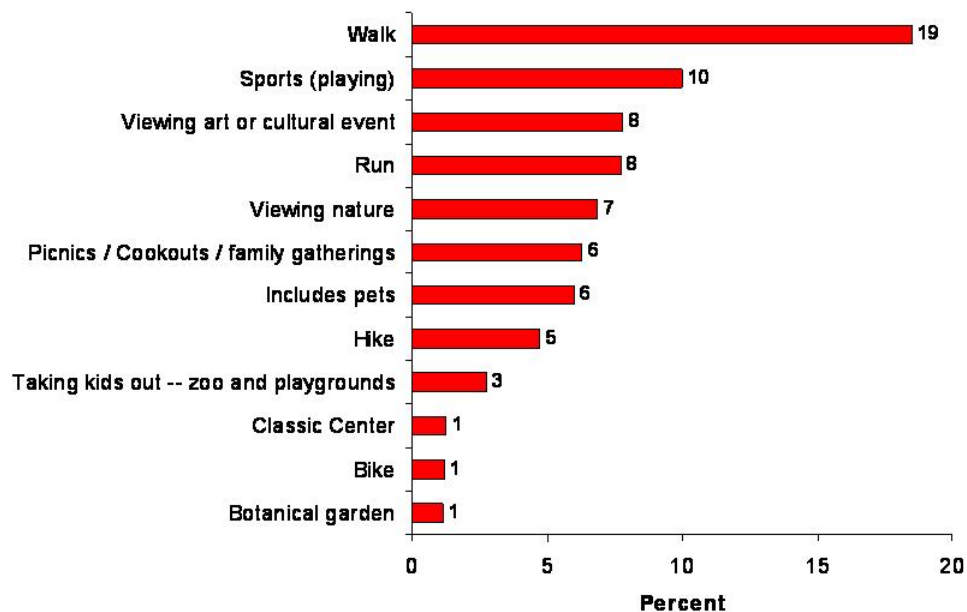
Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Survey Research Unit

ACC Comp Plan Survey

Spring 2007

## &gt;&gt; Favorite Activity in Athens



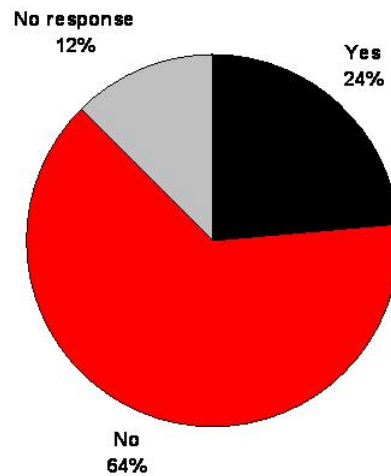
Carl Vinson Institute of Government

Survey Research Unit

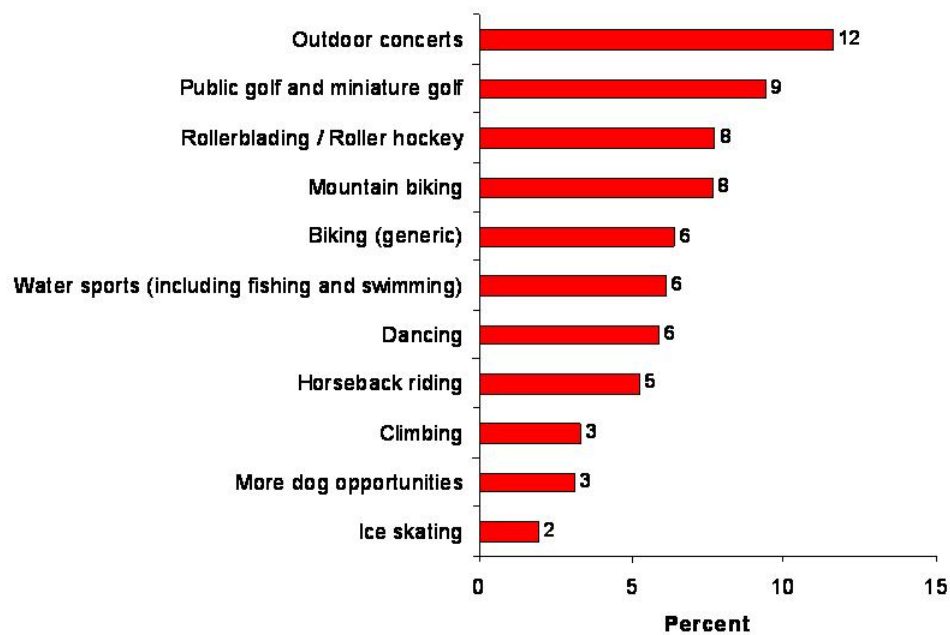
ACC Comp Plan Survey

Spring 2007

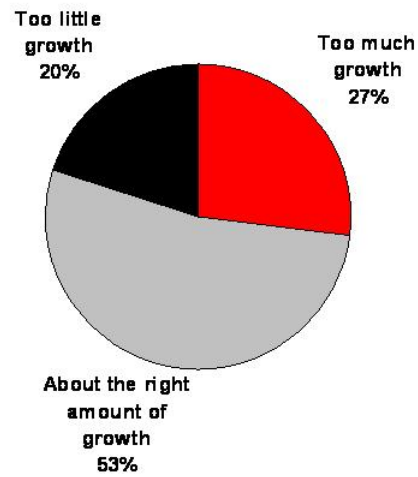
## >> Desired Activities for Which There is No Support



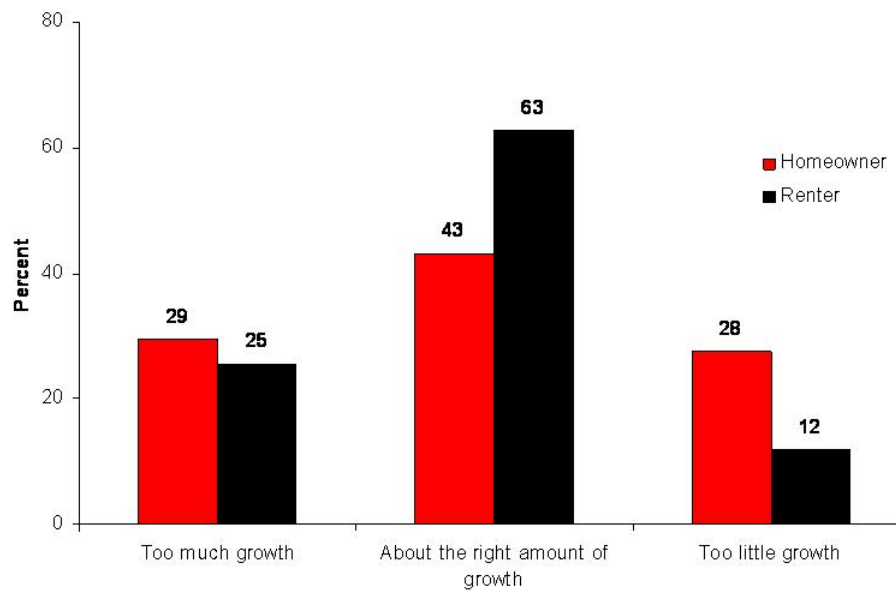
## >> Desired Activities that are Not Supported



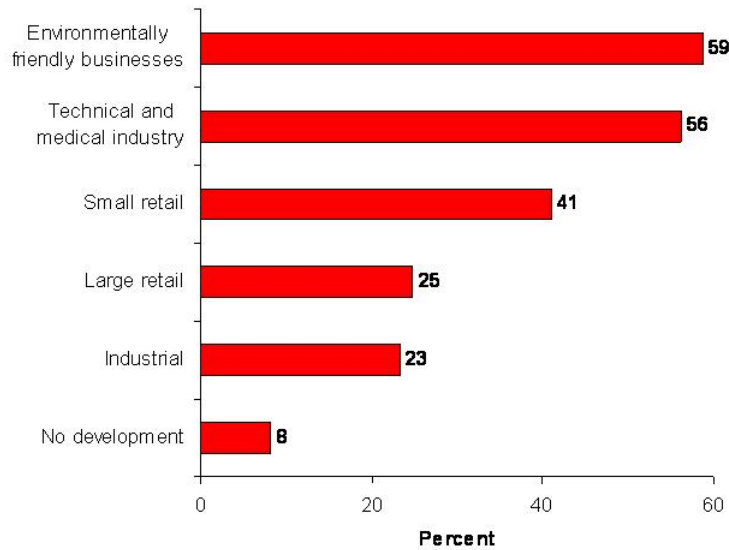
## >> Rate of commercial growth



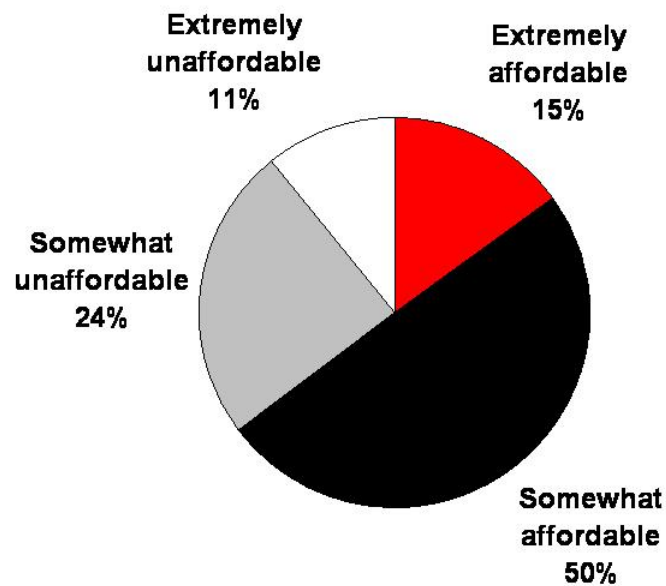
## >> Rate of commercial growth

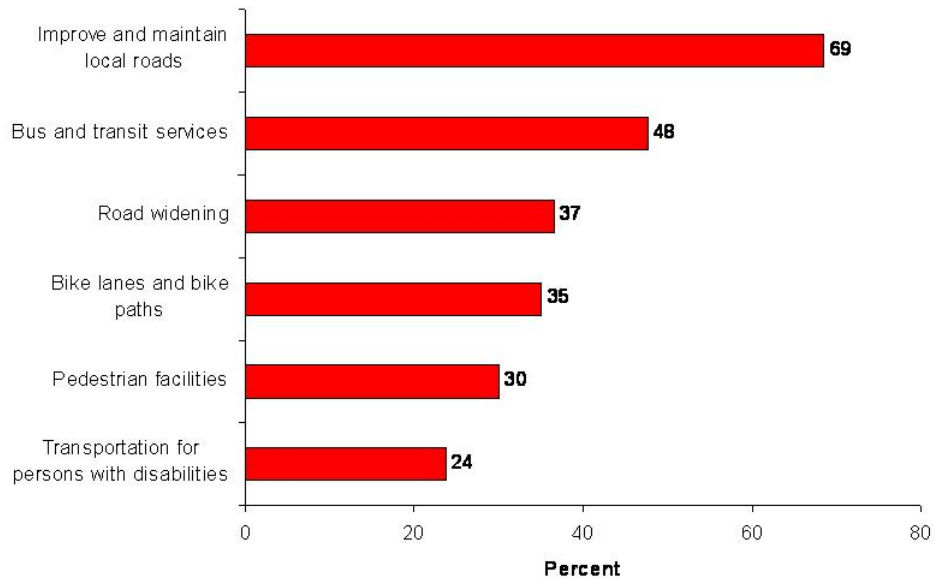
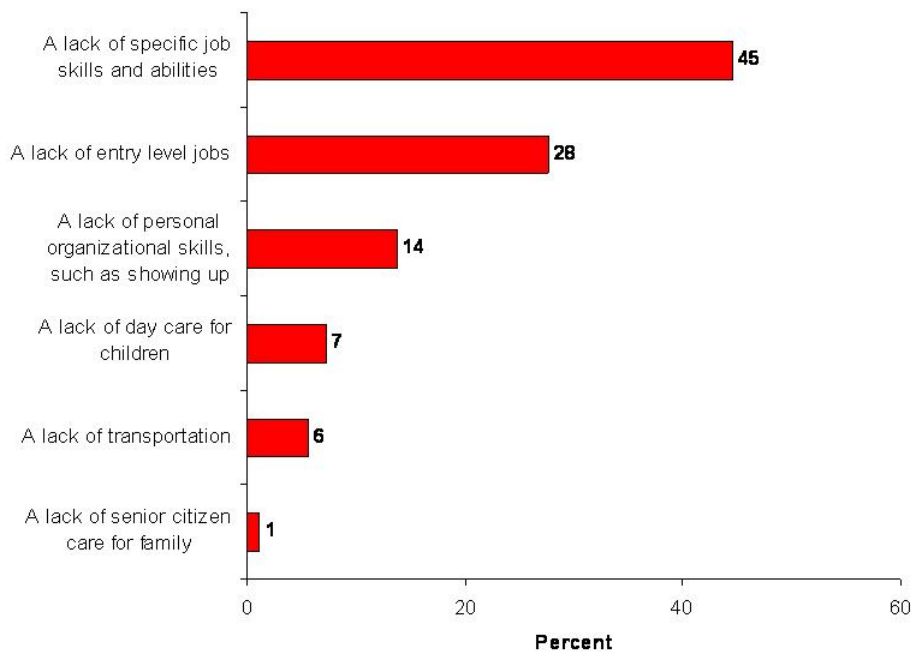


## >> What type of development would you like to attract?



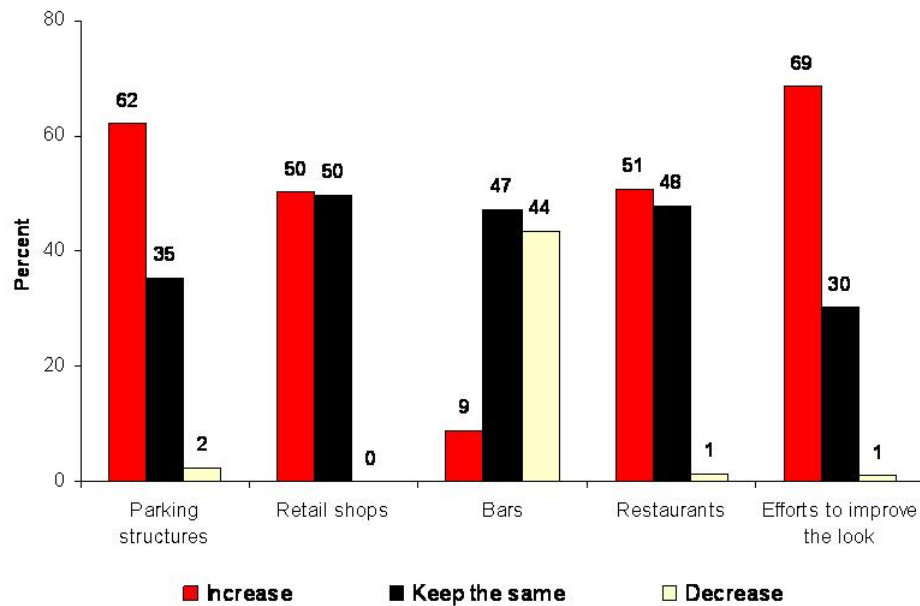
## >> Cost of housing



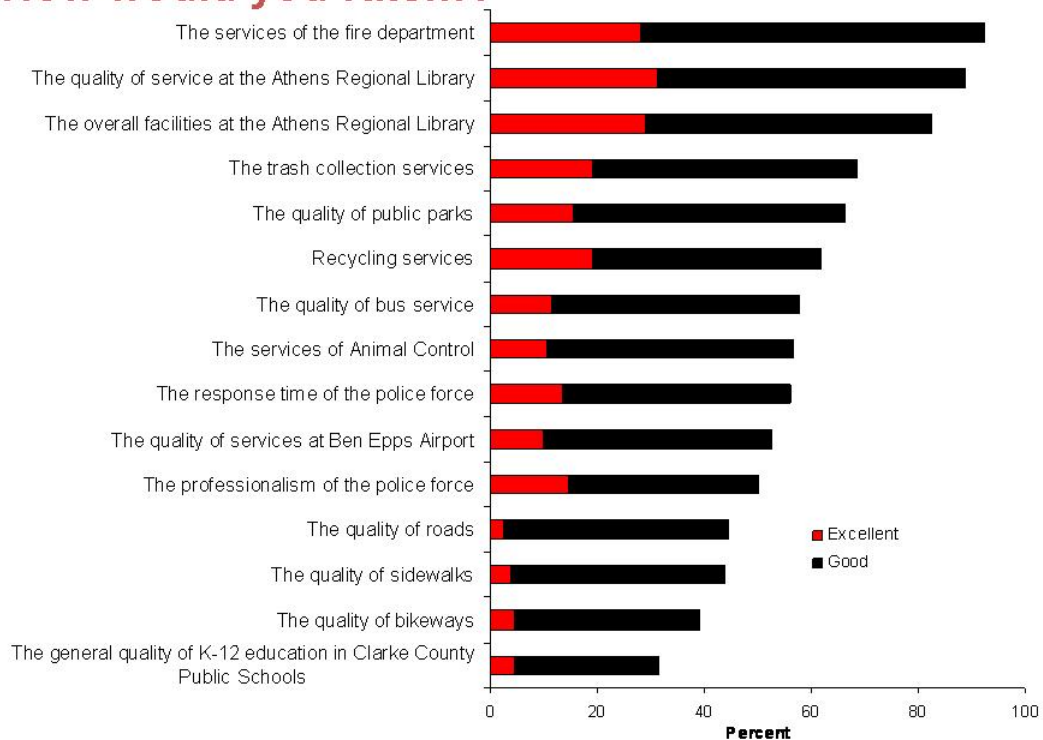
>> **Transportation resources**>> **Barriers to Employment**



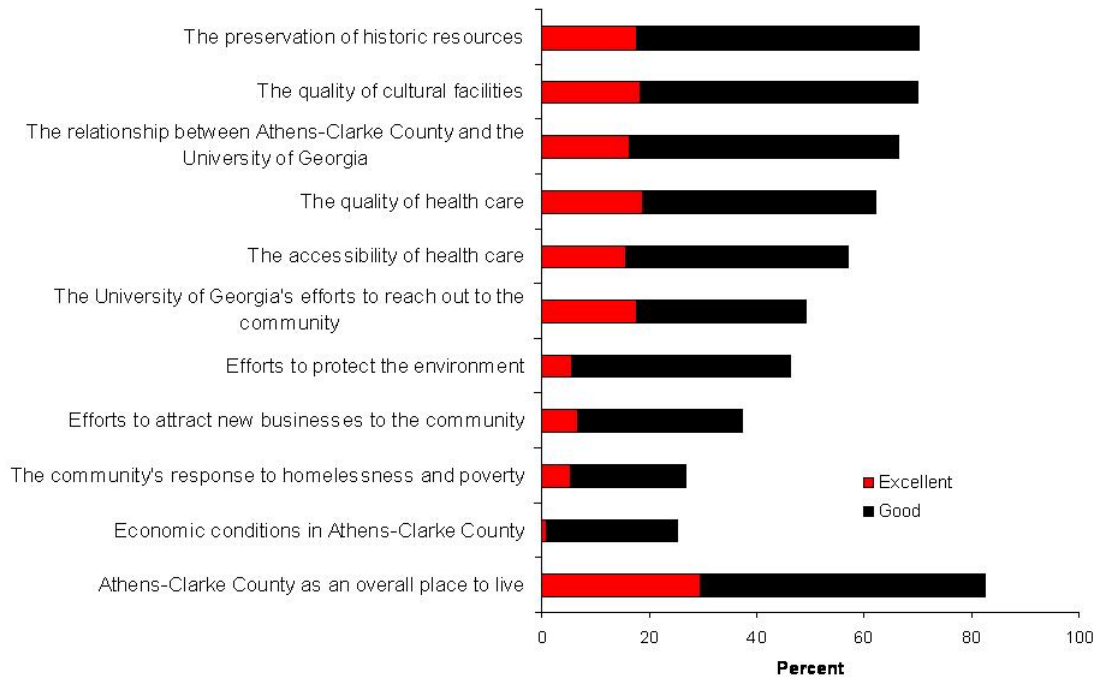
## >> Increase or Decrease?



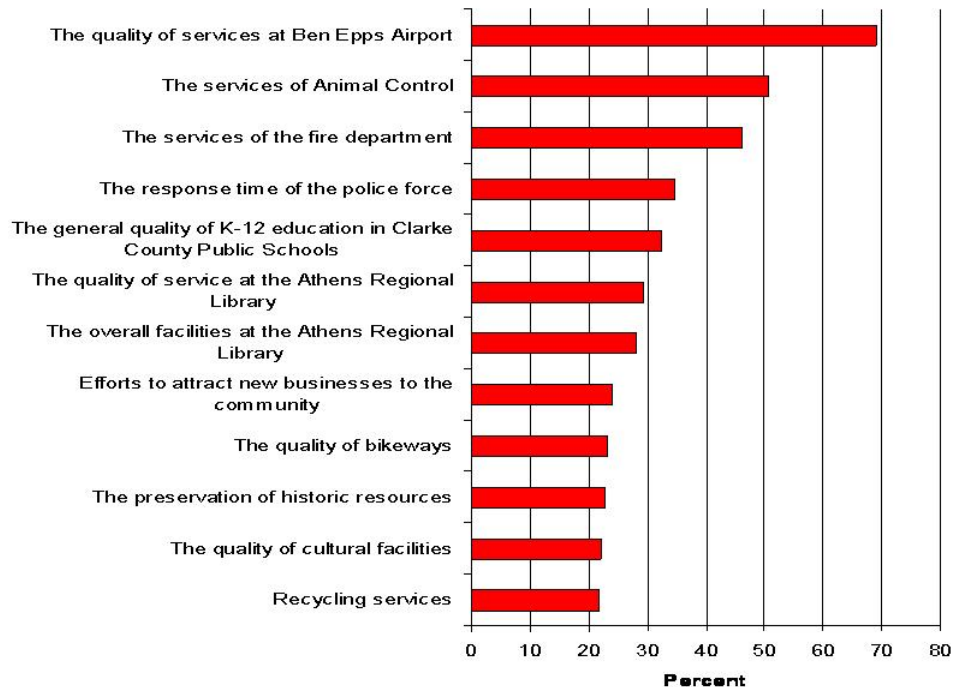
## >> How would you rate...?



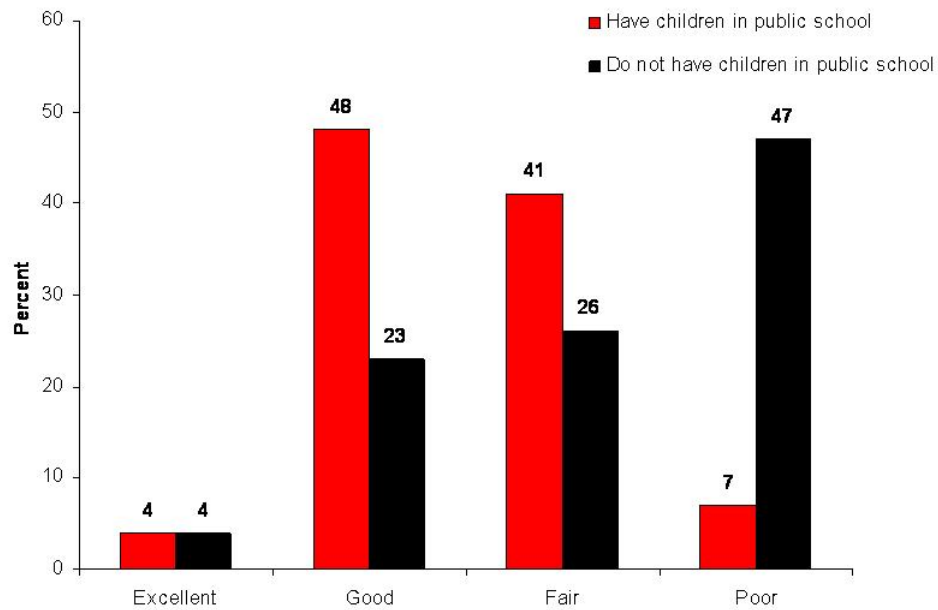
## &gt;&gt; How would you rate...?



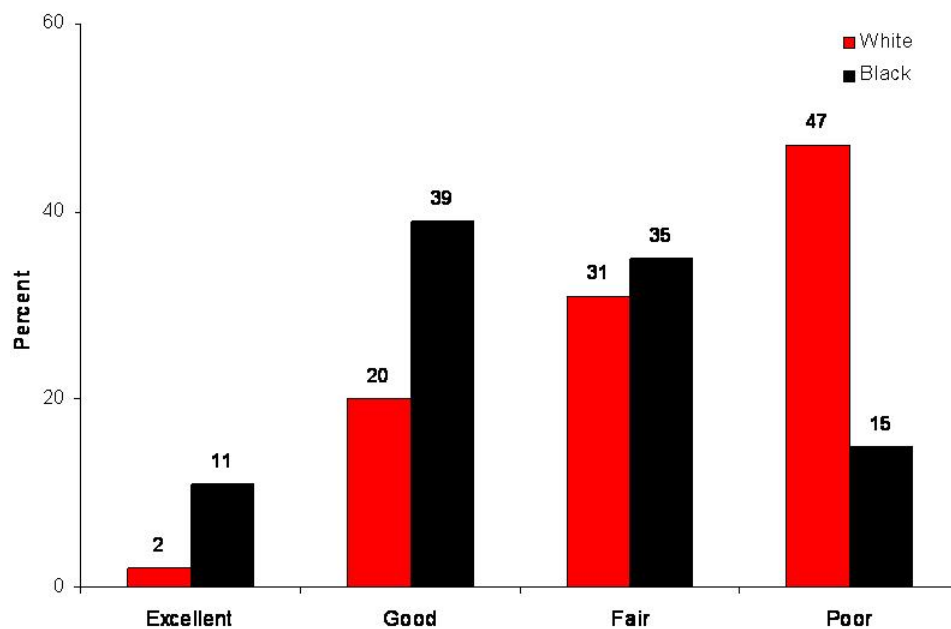
## &gt;&gt; Percentage of unsure responses



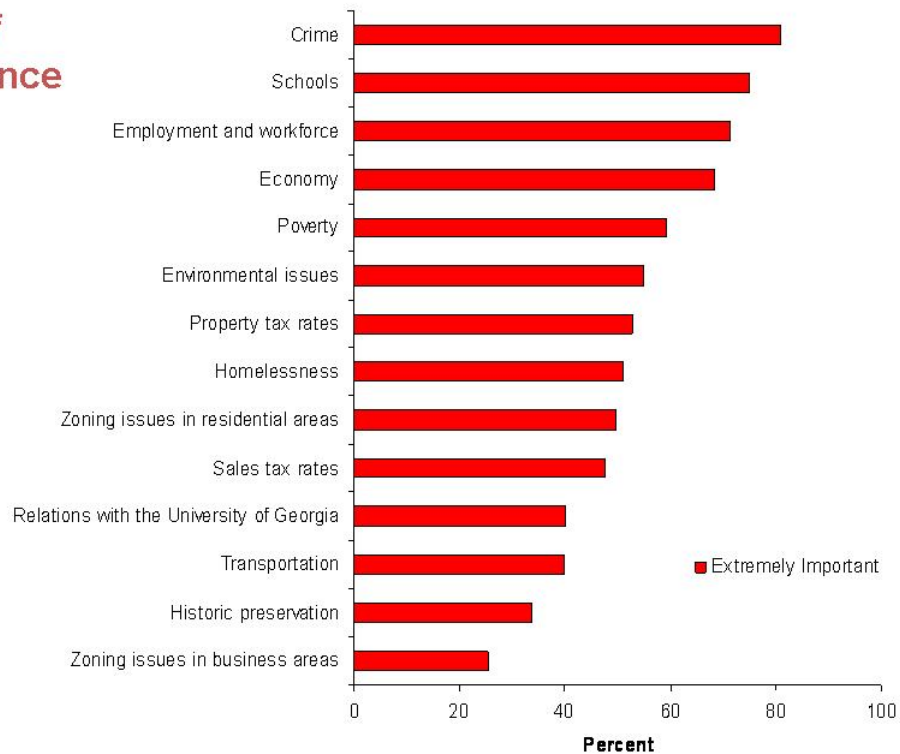
## >> How would you rate Clarke County public schools?



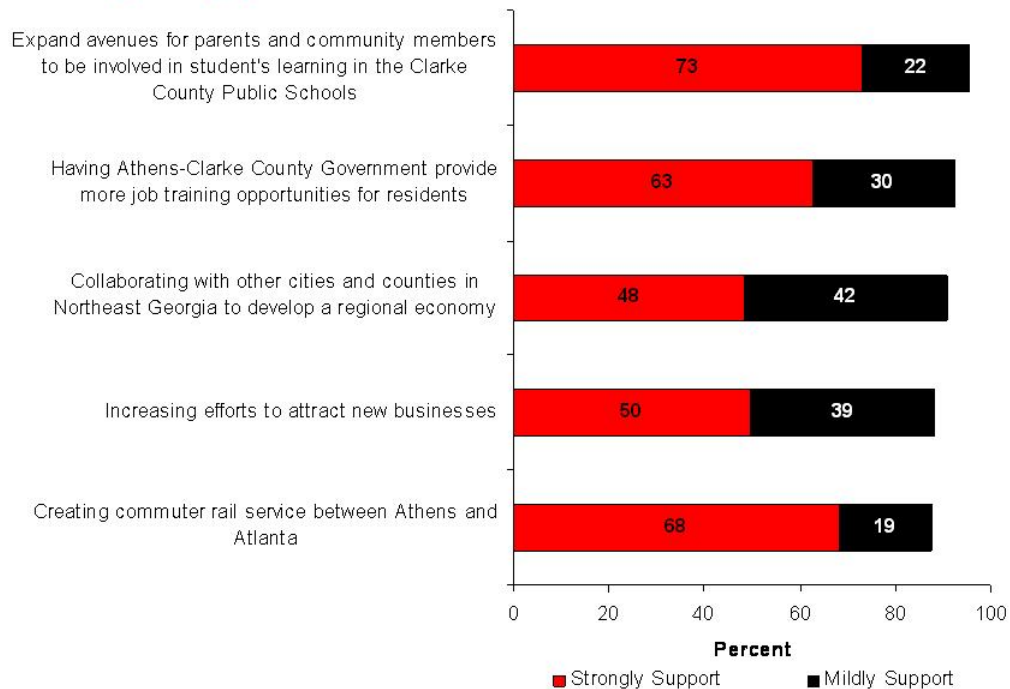
## >> How would you rate Clarke County public schools?



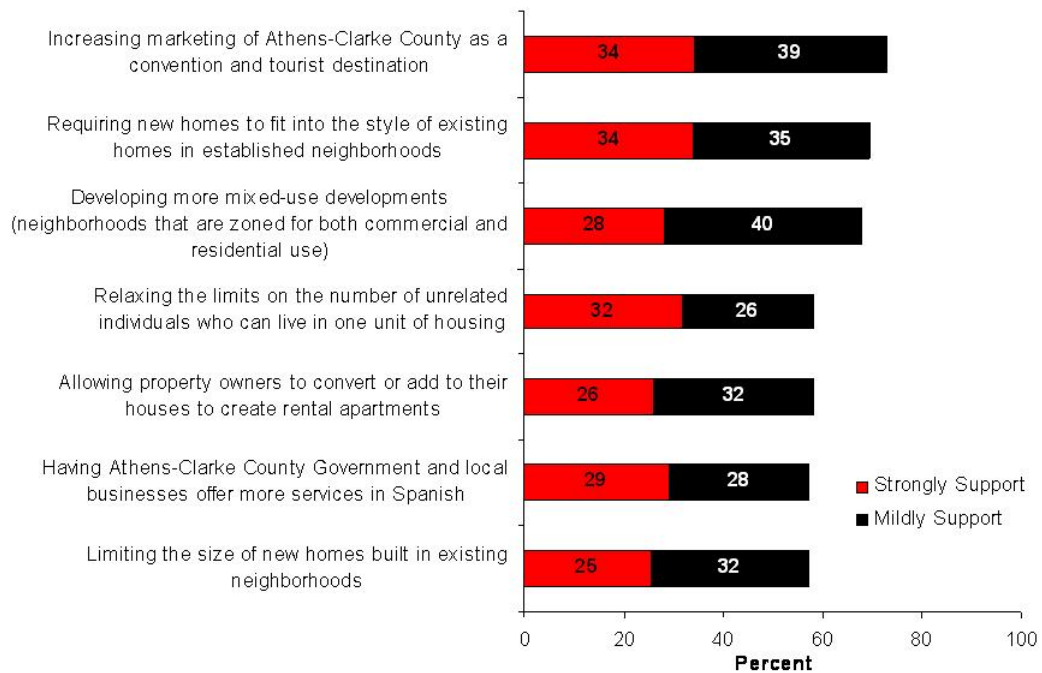
## &gt;&gt; Level of Importance



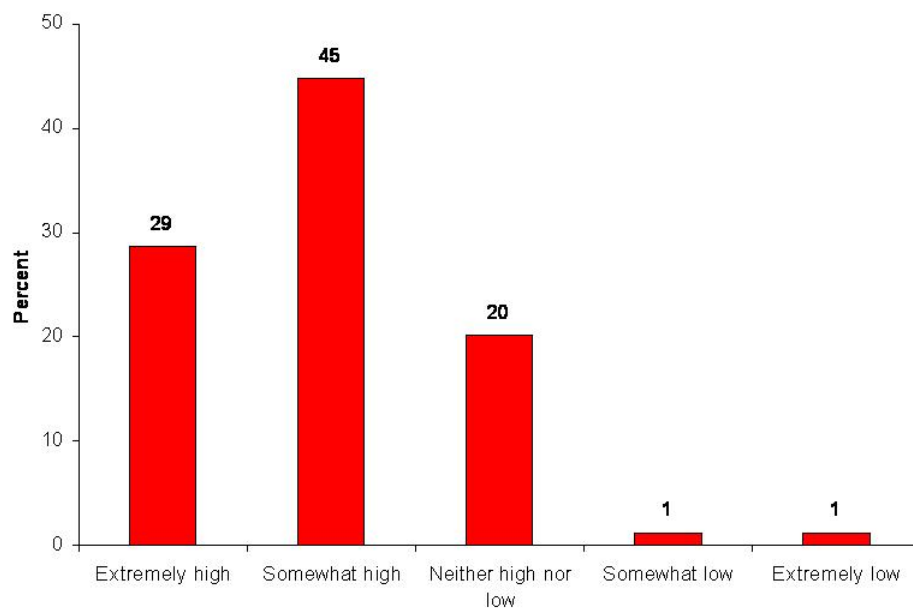
## &gt;&gt; Policy Support



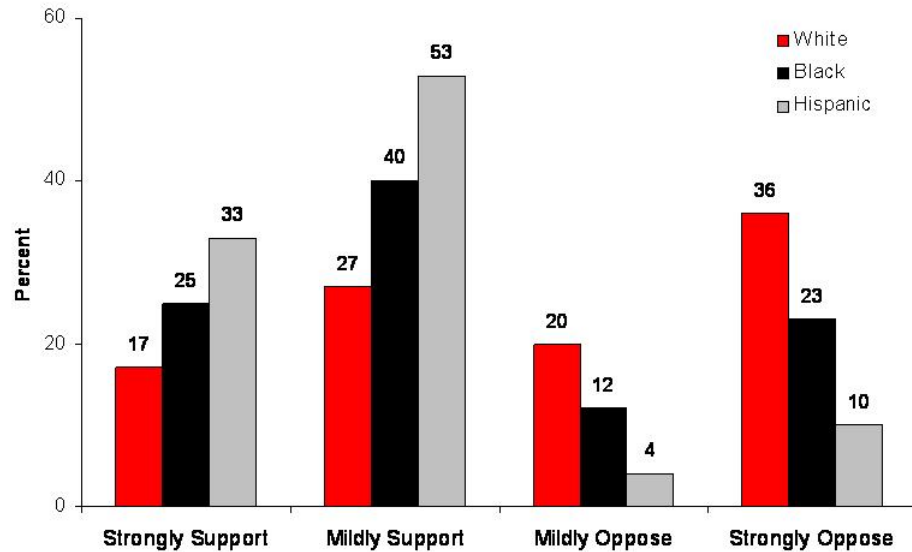
## >> Policy Support



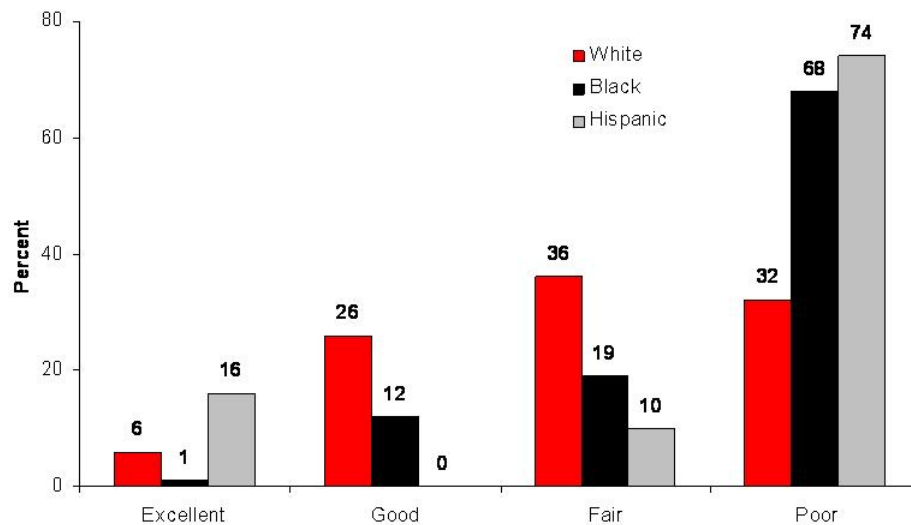
## >> Property Taxes



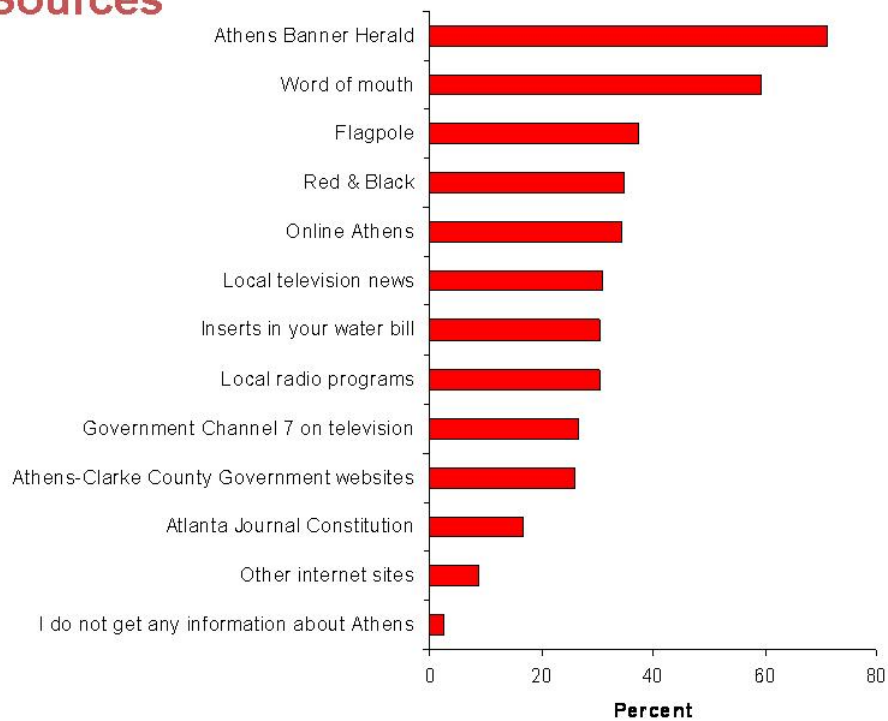
### >> Increasing the number of services offered in Spanish



### >> Community's response to homelessness and poverty



## &gt;&gt; News Sources



## &gt;&gt; Conclusions

**ACC positives are much stronger than negatives**

- A plurality see the county heading in the right direction
- A majority think that the current rate of growth in the county is about right
- The ACC government is generally well regarded
- UGA, Botanical Garden, and Classic Center seen as major assets for the community

