

## **Neighborhood groups post city council votes on Web site**

By **MARY MacDONALD**  
The Atlanta Journal-Constitution  
Published on: 03/28/08

A coalition of Sandy Springs neighborhood groups has compiled more than two years of city council decisions and posted the information on its Web site.

Among other things, the records collected by the Sandy Springs Council of Neighborhoods show the council has devoted most of its time to zoning.

Fifty-five percent of the council's votes taken between December 2005 and January related to zoning matters. Another 19 percent of the council's votes related to transportation, and 10 percent each to environmental and planning issues.

The council voted on 282 items during that time, according to the neighborhood project, which drew information from official minutes.

According to the data, the city council approved nearly all of the zoning requests that came before it. The council approved some 92 percent of zoning applications, although in most cases the approval was made with several conditions, said Susan Joseph, a neighborhood council volunteer who compiled the records.

As part of the project, called "Get Smart Sandy Springs," the council of neighborhoods created a searchable database of city council decisions.

But that document has not been posted on the neighborhood group's Web site because the data can be changed by people viewing the document.

Instead, the neighborhood council plans to post on its site a comparison of council member decisions, by district post and issue, Joseph said.

In the meantime, residents who are interested in particular issues, or in the voting record of a particular council member, can e-mail the organization at its Web site, [www.sandyspringscouncil.org](http://www.sandyspringscouncil.org).

Joseph and other neighborhood council members did not take a position on whether the pattern in voting was good or bad. The purpose of the project is getting information before the public, she said.

"The whole idea is to have an informed electorate," Joseph said.