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Wyche warns against unplanned Upstate growth
Residents must become involved in process, he said.

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Brad Wyche, director of Upstate Forever, said Thursday the Upstate will resemble Atlanta by 2040 if city and county planners don't do something now to regulate growth in areas such as Woodruff Road.

Wyche added that the Greenville-Spartanburg region now is considered the fifth-fastest-growing area in the country.

During the Greater Greenville Chamber of Commerce's bimonthly meeting Thursday, he offered a bleak prediction of what's in store for Upstate residents in the future.

If city and county planners aren't careful, the Eastside -- including Woodruff and Pelham roads -- could be just another dot on the map. Or it could be a special place where parks and green space abound, he said.

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To illustrate his point, Wyche said the county is growing at a rate of about 16 people per day.

Too much land is still being consumed, he said, which leads to more traffic and fewer sidewalks and parks. But all isn't yet lost, Wyche said.

Residents must become involved by attending planning commission meetings and talking with each other and to members about what they want Greenville to become, he said.

Otherwise, he said, residents would have a lowered quality of life in terms of air, water, traffic congestion and sediment runoff.

Wyche said 16 acres are developed in Greenville County every day, "the equivalent to one new Haywood Mall every day in the Upstate region."

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