

## **Editorial – Marietta Daily Journal**

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### **Noonday path to help boost quality of life**

If "hitting the trail" is your idea of great recreation, you're in the right place. And that place - Cobb County - is about to be even better in terms of opportunities for trail-based recreation.

A ceremonial groundbreaking took place Tuesday for the long-awaited and much-anticipated Noonday Creek Trail through north Cobb. The six-mile trail will roughly follow the path of Noonday Creek between Bell's Ferry Road and the northern boundary of Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park. It will wind just north of Town Center at Cobb mall and duck under Interstate 75 along the way.

Better yet, at the battlefield it will tie in with the existing, very popular trail from the park's visitors' center area south into downtown Marietta. That trail, in turn, is envisioned as continuing southward to Smyrna and beyond, ultimately tying in with the ultra-popular Silver Comet Trail in south Cobb and even with existing and future trails that could go all the way to Stone Mountain.

"The whole beauty of the project is it has the potential to link up to the national battlefield, link up with Marietta and Smyrna's trail, connect with the Silver Comet Trail and go all the way to Atlanta," said Cobb Commission Chairman Sam Olens. "It connects and expands the trail network in the entire region."

And added northwest Cobb Commissioner Helen Goreham, "Even though the trail is primarily in Districts 1 and 3, it's going to serve all of Cobb County and beyond. The potential users of this trail will be huge numbers."

A key player in the development of the new trail has been the Town Center Community Improvement District, which has spent more than \$876,000 on engineering and design studies for it during the past decade.

"We're most excited about enhancing the quality of life for Cobb residents who live and work up here," said Mason Zimmerman, who chairs the Town Center Community Improvement District.

Construction costs for the trail are coming from the county's Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax for roads, from the state Department of Transportation, from the federal government and from the CID.

East Cobb Commissioner Tim Lee stressed the value of recreational opportunities on the county's quality of life.

"One of the top-ranking issues with any business that comes to Cobb County is the quality of life. Noonday Creek will add to that quality of life," he said.

The new trail will be built in segments, with the first two expected to be complete by year's end. The rest should be done by 2012.

When it and its counterparts are complete, it will help solidify Cobb's status as one of the most bountifully blessed communities in the state in terms of such recreational opportunities.