

Noonday Creek Trail Extension Scoping Study

Community Open House
August 9, 2023



Cobb County
Department of Transportation

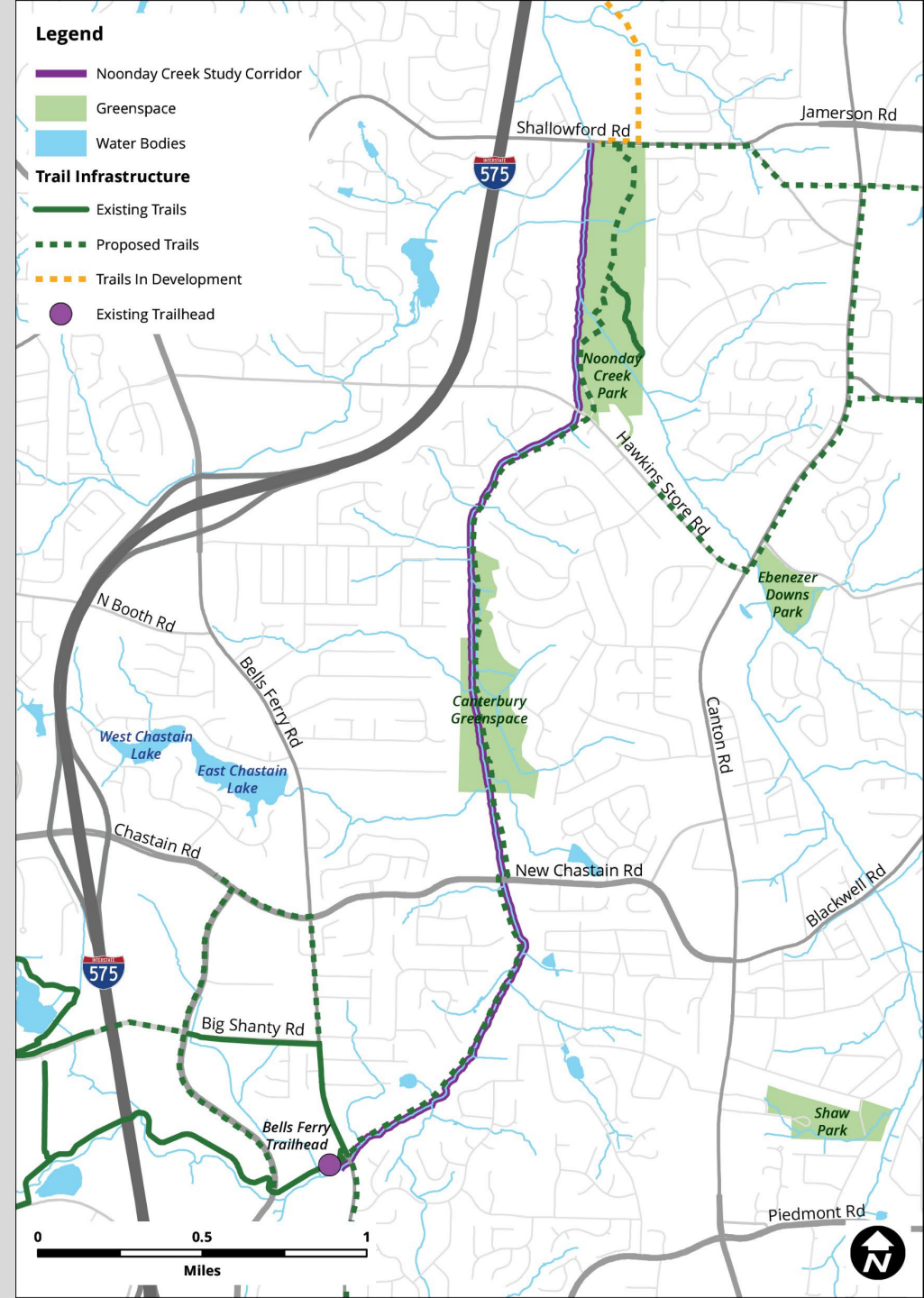
Study Purpose

The Noonday Creek Trail Extension was identified as a **priority trail in the Cobb County Greenways and Trail Master Plan.**

The purpose of this study is to develop **safe, connected, multimodal, and cost-effective solutions** to the project trail.

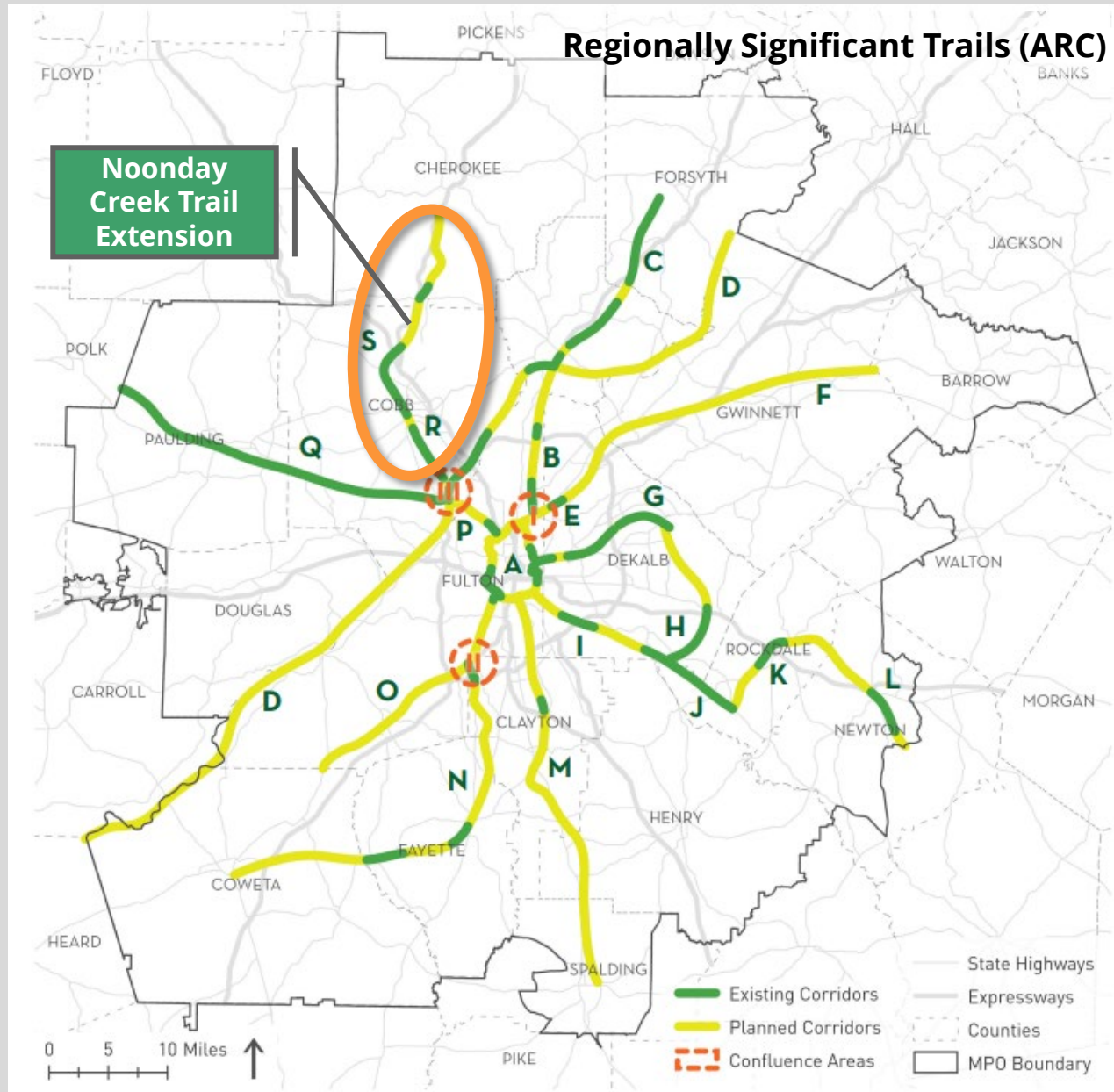
This extension would:

- **Expand the existing Noonday Creek Trail**, which currently ends at the trailhead on Bells Ferry Road, to Noonday Creek Park.
- **Close a trail gap** between the Bells Ferry Trailhead in Cobb County and the Noonday Creek Trail underway in Cherokee County.



Project History

- The existing **Noonday Creek Trail** stretches **7 miles from Kennesaw Mountain to Bells Ferry Road**. It is part of the larger Mountain-to-River (MTR) Trail network which connects Kennesaw Mountain to the Chattahoochee River.
- The regional trail vision's Northwest Corridor Trail includes the Noonday Creek Trail, its proposed extension, and the MTR Trail as a **Regionally Significant Trail**, making it a priority for regional and federal funding.
- The City of Woodstock and Cherokee County are constructing a southward extension of the Noonday Creek Trail into Cobb County.



Study Considerations

- **Consistency with the vision and goals** of the County's **Comprehensive Transportation Plan, Greenway and Trails Master Plan**, and the **Atlanta Region's Plan**
- **Broad public and stakeholder support**
- **Maximize safety, connectivity, and efficiency**
- **Address the existing and future needs of trail users**
- **Support future federal funding applications**

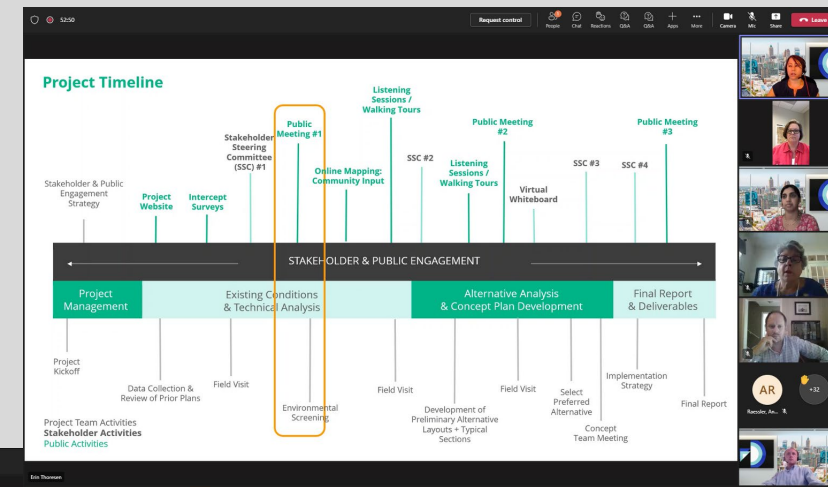


Engagement Summary



Virtual Public Meeting

- July 27, 2022
- ~35 participants
- Introduction to the scoping study
- Overview of study timeline, key work tasks, and engagement activities/opportunities
- Community context
- Preliminary results from online/in-person intercept survey
- Interactive questions gathering input about why people visit parks and trails, favorite trails in the area, preferred amenities



Existing Conditions and Technical Analysis

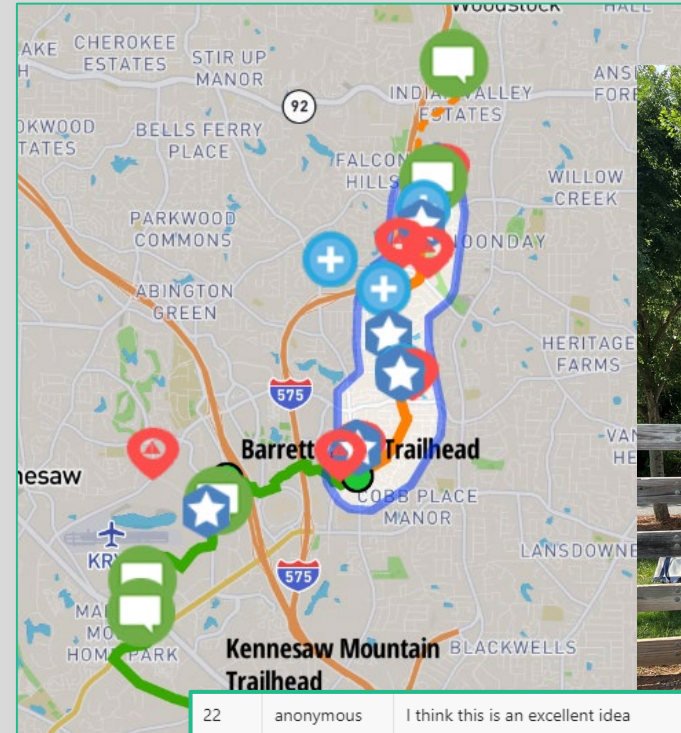
- Review prior plans and studies to ensure coordination with previous efforts.
- Examine characteristics of the natural environment, historical and archaeological resources, and land use and transportation network, including traffic and safety at potential road crossings.
- Analysis will help inform the development of alternative trail alignments and recommendations.

Intercept and Online Survey

- **648 surveys** completed (as of 7/12/22)
- People visit the trail primarily:
 - For health/exercise
 - To experience nature and wildlife
 - To walk their dog or another pet
- Most people visit **2-5 times a month, year-round**
- **Most people drive** to the trailheads, but around **11% walk or run** from surrounding communities

Community Surveys

- **Conducted spring and summer 2022**
 - Online and in-person at Noonday Creek Park and Bells Ferry Trailhead
- **749 total responses**
- Questions about how and why people visit trails and parks, factors that influence their choice of trails and parks, preferred activities and amenities
- **429 open-ended comments**
 - **Most (81%) were supportive** of the potential trail extension, connections to Woodstock, safer off-road connection to the park and trailhead, and desire for greenspace without fields
 - **Some (9%) expressed concerns** about the project, citing impacts to natural environment, safety/security, disruptions to neighborhoods/private property access



22	anonymous	I think this is an excellent idea
23	anonymous	I would LOVE this!
24	anonymous	i live right near noonday creek park with my husband (30 year old) and i would love a safe walking trail connecting to bells ferry!!!
25	anonymous	Extend it! We want the Cherokee/Woodstock trail and current Noonday Creek trail to be connected. You should extend the current Noonday Creek trail in the current (west) side of the creek, until it passes Hawkins store road, and then bridge over the creek right into the big parking lot area of the park, on the Hawkins store road side of the park. (Aligning with the bridge in the park currently spanning little Noonday Creek)
26	anonymous	Nothing would make me happier!!!
27	anonymous	Would love this to happen! It would be nice to hop on the trail and avoid the road to the park from our house
28	anonymous	Love the trail
29	anonymous	Please dont build this extension.

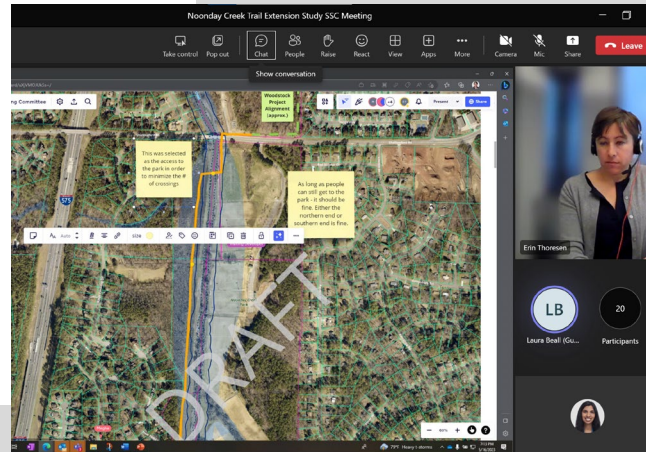


Stakeholder Steering Committee

- Atlanta Regional Commission
- Bells Ferry Civic Association / Keep Cobb Beautiful
- Bells Ferry Elementary School
- Canterbury HOA
- Canton Road Neighbors
- Chadds Ridge HOA
- Cherokee County
- City of Woodstock
- Cobb County PARKS, Water System, and Community Development
- Georgia Department of Transportation
- Town Center CID / Community Alliance
- Vanderlande

Meetings: July 2022, December 2022, May 2023

What one word or phrase describes your vision for the Noonday Creek Trail Extension?

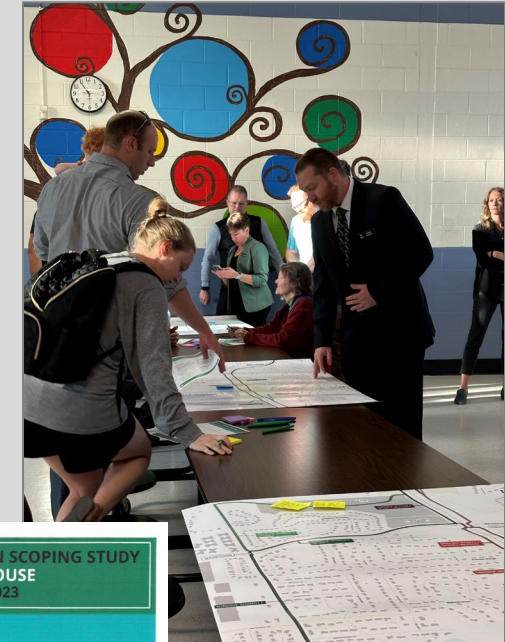
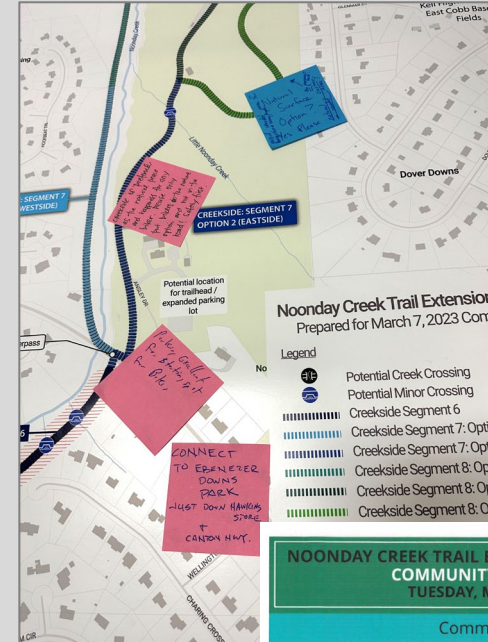


Themes and topics discussed

- Enthusiasm for the trail extension project
- Safety and comfort concerns with at-grade road crossings, roadside alignments
- Need for future consideration of parking options
- Importance of interagency coordination and rising costs (materials, labor, and mitigation)
- Strong preference for trail to follow creek
- Desire for areas to pull off the trail to stop and rest, create loops if/where possible
- Willingness to have trail cross creeks to avoid property impacts
- Concern for conflicts between trail and park users inside Noonday Creek Park

March 2023 Community Open House

- 62 attendees, 36 comment cards received
- Majority (32) expressed enthusiasm for the trail extension:
 - Desire for more connectivity to other trails and communities
 - Prefer to avoid an alignment along the road
- Concerns (4) mentioned:
 - Safety/security where the proposed alignment skirts private property
 - Impact to natural environment
- Overall preference for the proposed trail to follow Noonday Creek instead of the road
- Except where trail skirts private properties, no strong preference given to either side of Noonday Creek



**NOONDAY CREEK TRAIL EXTENSION SCOPING STUDY
COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE
TUESDAY, MARCH 7, 2023**

Comment Form

Name: Sarah [redacted]

Neighborhood/Organization: Summer Mill

Email: [redacted]@gmail.com

What do you think about the proposed Noonday Creek Trail extension?
Our family is excited about the proposed expansion. Ease of access to water, bike a run would be so nice and to not have to cross Bells Ferry Rd.
← toddler agrees!

What amenities and features would you like to see on the Noonday Creek Trail?
Playground w/swings
water/bathroom
bike service station

Cobb County Department of Transportation
Gresham Smith



Draft Trail Concept



Development of Draft Trail Concept

The draft trail concept has been developed through a **combination of technical analysis and feedback received from the community and key stakeholders.**

Technical Analysis

- Review of existing land use, transportation infrastructure and networks, and the natural environment
- Property ownership and right-of-way needs
- Potential impacts to environmental and cultural resources
- Utility impacts and potential relocation needs
- Estimated cost

Community Engagement Activities

- Virtual Community Meeting and Community Open Houses (*Jul 2022, Mar and Aug 2023*)
- Stakeholder Steering Committee meetings (*Jul and Dec 2022, May 2023*)
- Community Walking Tour (*Aug 2022*)
- Online Mapping Exercise (*Jul-Sep 2022*)
- Online and Intercept Surveys (*Jun and Jul 2022*)

More information on the technical analysis and engagement activities is available on the boards around the room.

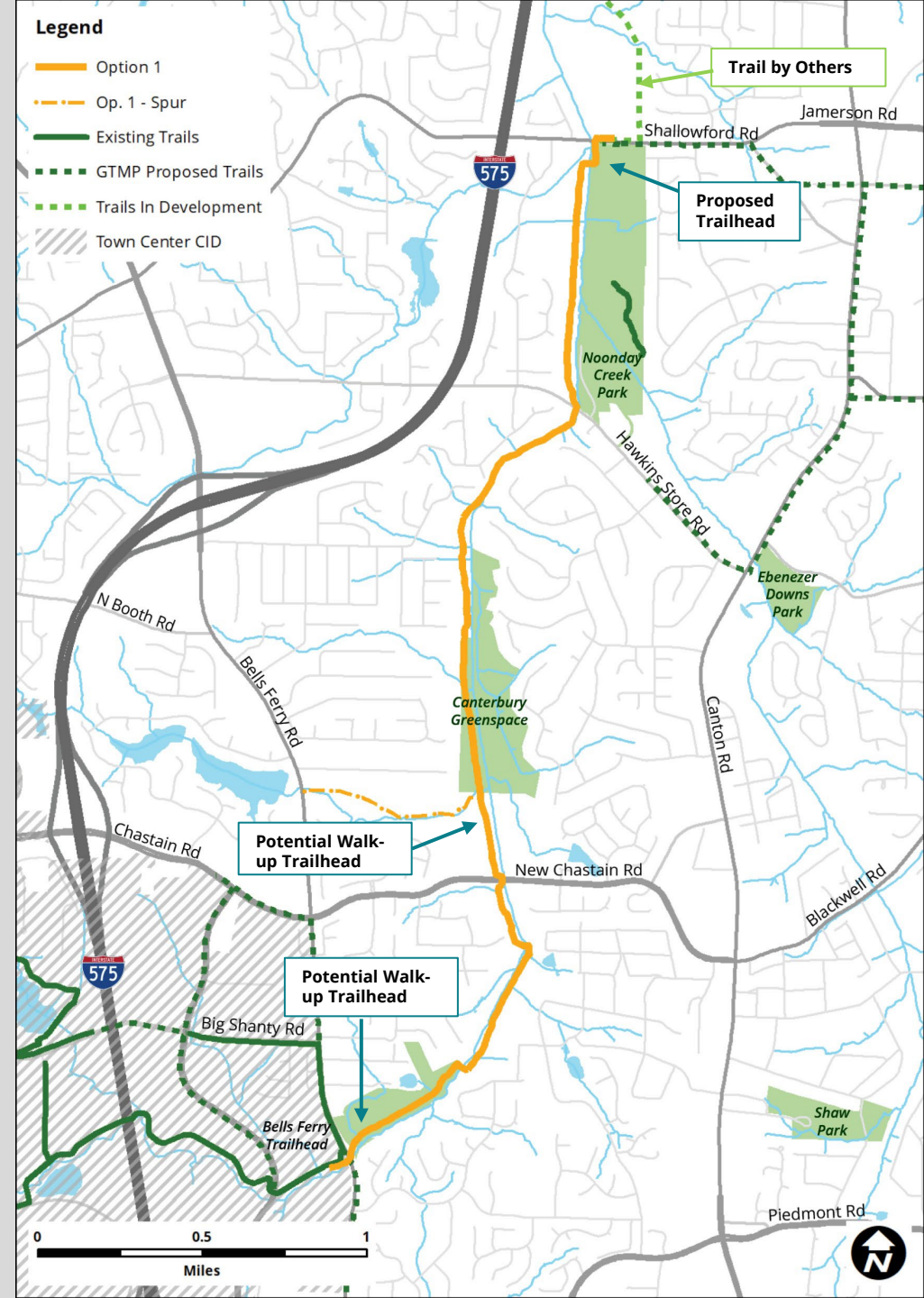
Draft Trail Concept

Summary

- 3.8 miles in length
- 10-ft wide, paved multi-use trail
- Follows Noonday Creek, primarily on west side
- Uses boardwalk to traverse environmentally sensitive areas
- Passes beneath four roadway bridges
- Crosses Noonday Creek three times
- Multiple opportunities for potential trailheads

Total Estimated Cost:
\$19 million*
(~\$5 million / mile)

**includes design, construction, utilities, right-of-way, environmental mitigation, and contingency*



Draft Trail Concept

Benefits

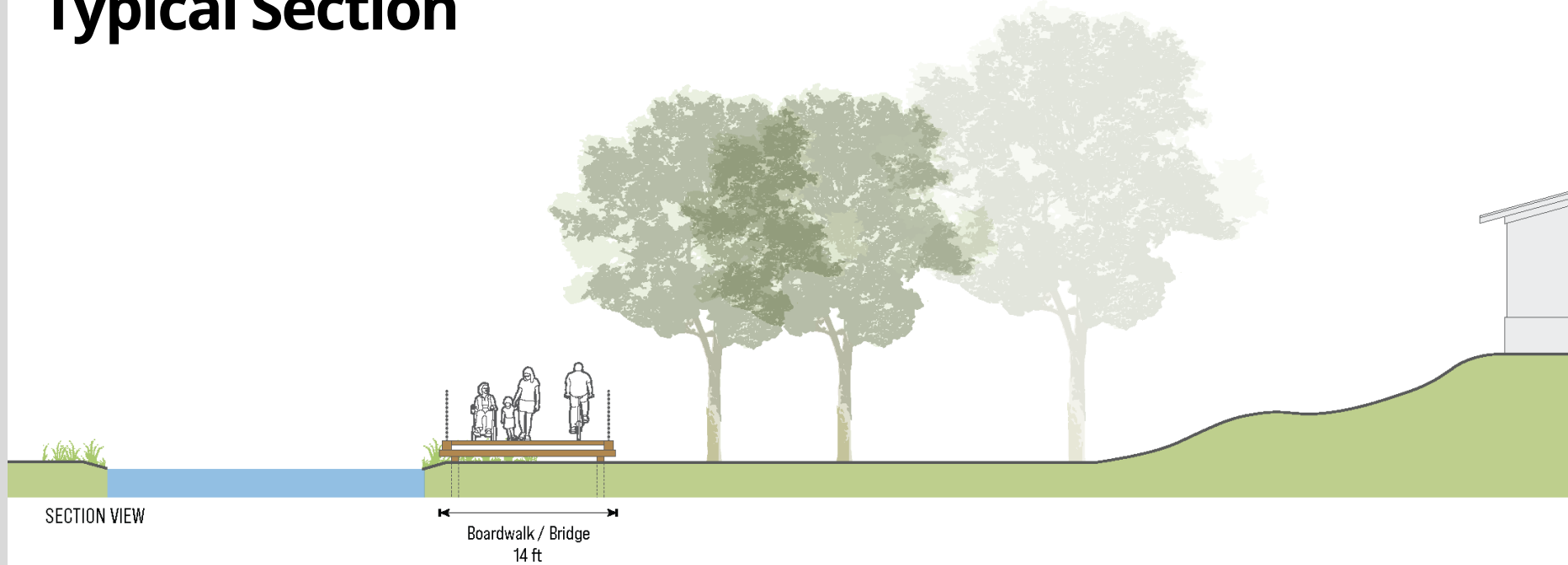
- Lower cost compared to roadside option
- Leverages the most publicly-owned property / fewest property impacts
- Aligns with community's preference for a creekside trail
- Flatter area along creek easy for biking
- Leverage area along sewer easement for maintenance
- Opportunities for future connections to neighborhoods if desired
- Skirts Noonday Creek Park due to potential conflicts with fields and park users

Challenges

- Impacts to private property in two constrained areas, including two large properties
- Constrained space for trail opposite Noonday Creek Park



Typical Section



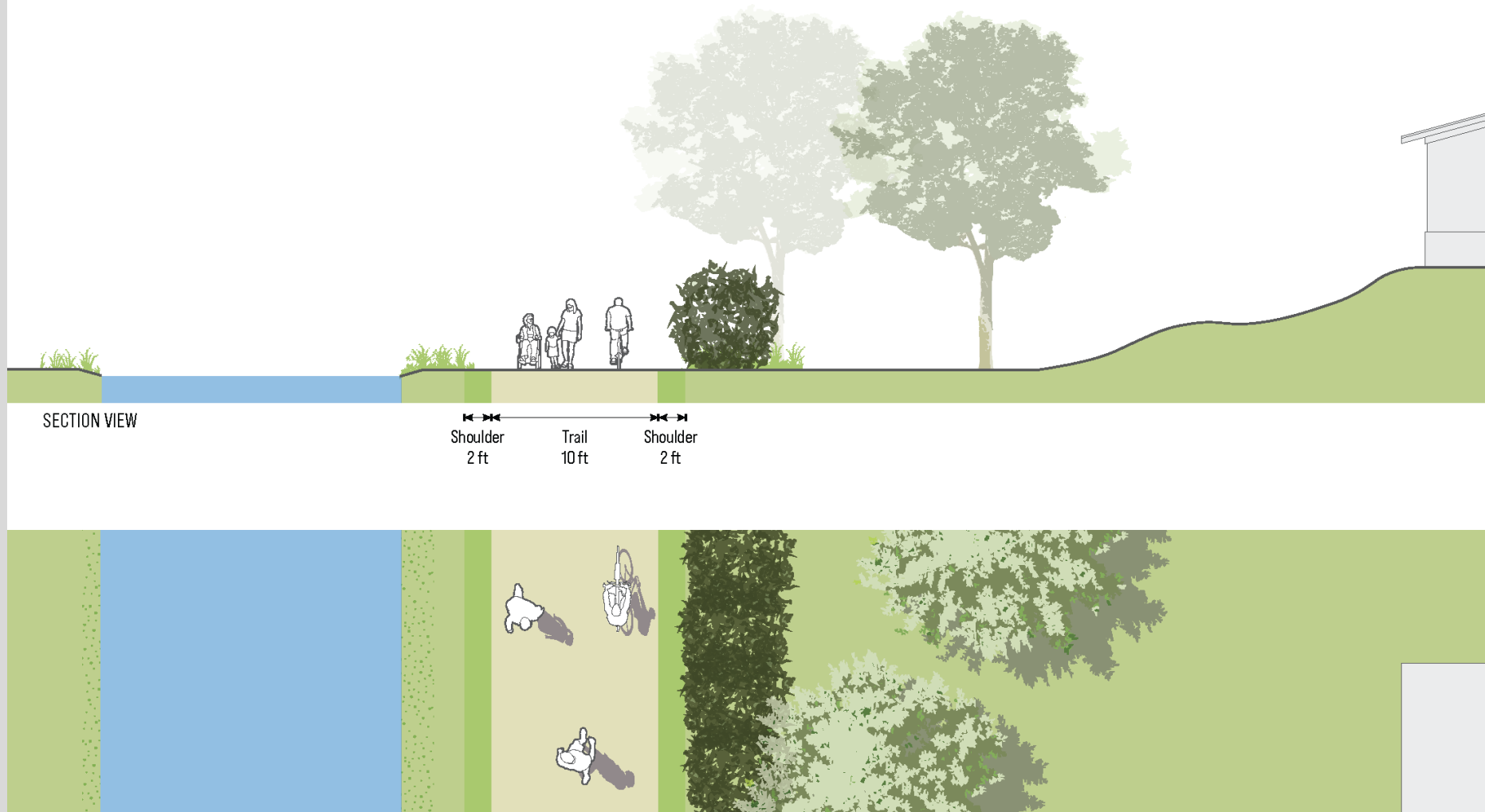
TRAIL ON BRIDGE / BOARDWALK

Noonday Creek Trail | Typical Section

This diagram is an illustrative representation of what a segment of the proposed trail may look like, from a cross-section and overhead perspective. It is meant to represent a possible design option, not a specific location along the proposed trail.



Typical Section



SECTION VIEW

Shoulder
2 ft

Trail
10 ft

Shoulder
2 ft

PLAN VIEW

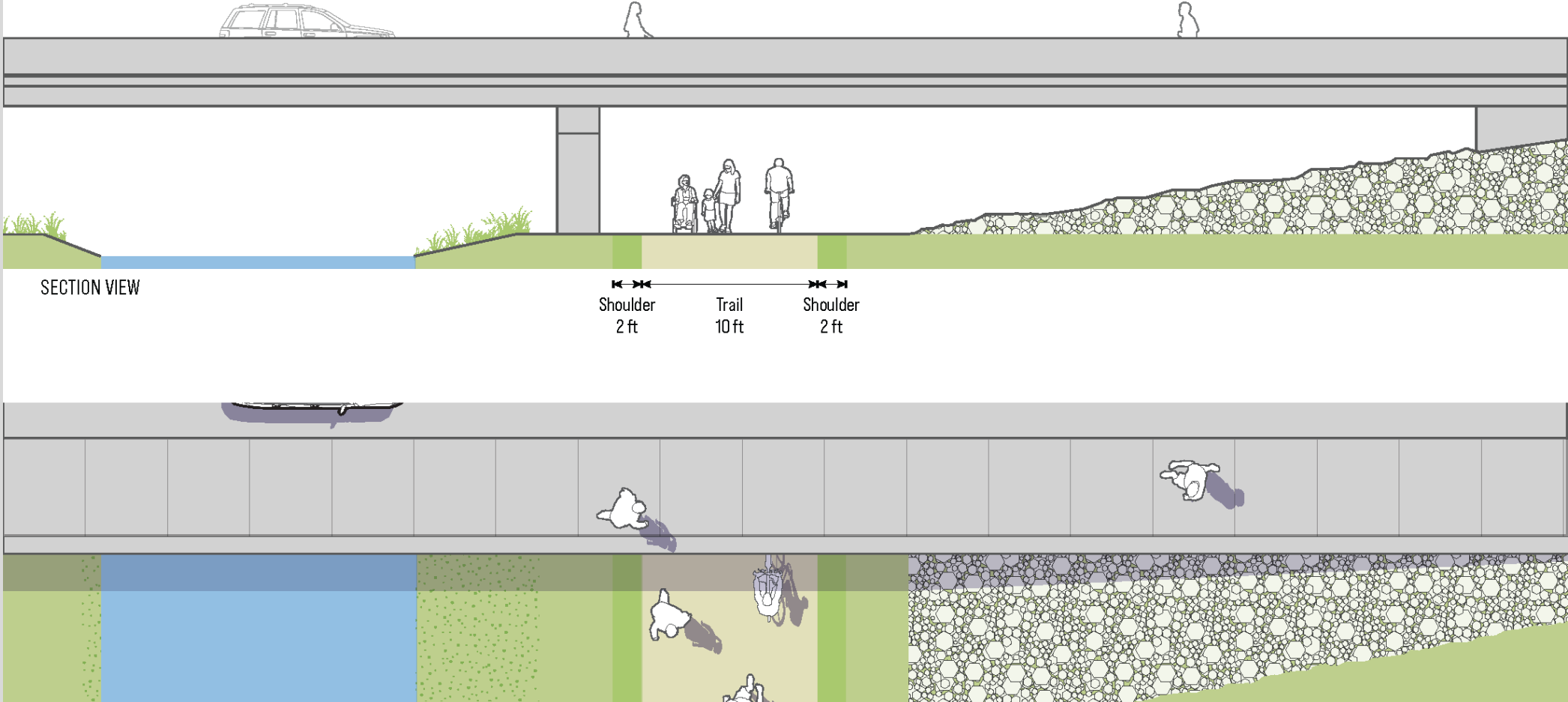
TRAIL WITH VEGETATIVE SCREENING

Noonday Creek Trail | Typical Section

This diagram is an illustrative representation of what a segment of the proposed trail may look like, from a cross-section and overhead perspective. It is meant to represent a possible design option, not a specific location along the proposed trail.



Typical Section



SECTION VIEW

Shoulder 2 ft Trail 10 ft Shoulder 2 ft

PLAN VIEW

TRAIL AT BRIDGE UNDERPASS

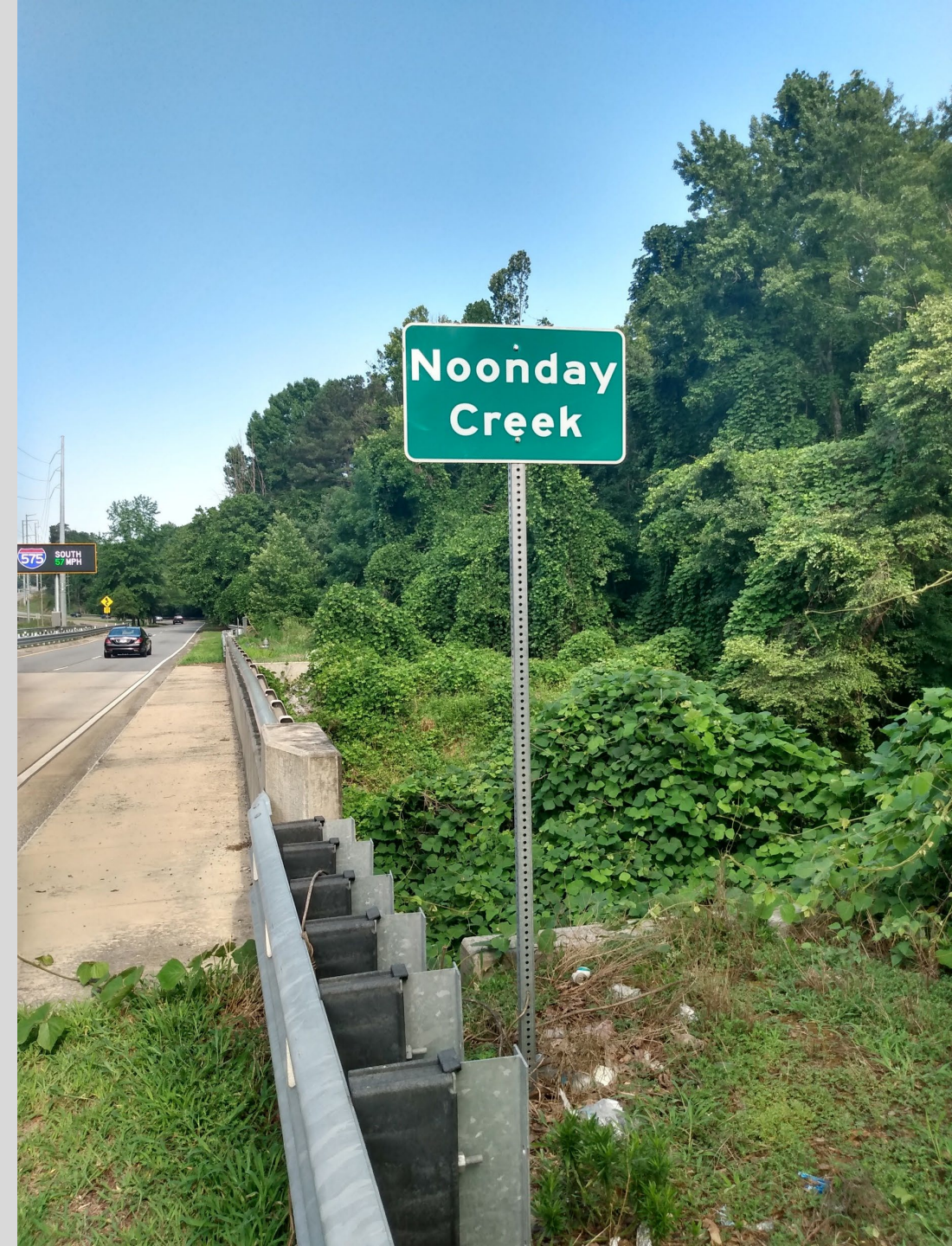
Noonday Creek Trail | Typical Section

This diagram is an illustrative representation of what a segment of the proposed trail may look like, from a cross-section and overhead perspective. It is meant to represent a possible design option, not a specific location along the proposed trail.



What Happens Next?

- **Provide your feedback at today's open house!**
- Cobb County will consider the feedback received today and finalize the Concept Report.
- It is anticipated that Cobb County will present the concept to the Board of Commissioners for approval in Fall 2023.
- **No funding is currently identified for design and construction.** The County will seek funding from federal and state partners, and potentially fund a portion of the proposed trail through a future Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST).



Please visit the stations around the room to take a closer look at the draft trail concept and learn more about how it was developed.

**Project team members are available if you have questions or would like to provide feedback.
Thank you for attending today!**

Contact Info

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