

## LOOP TRAIL STUDY

### 7/27/2020 PUBLIC MEETING SUMMARY

This first public meeting was initially scheduled for an in-person meeting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was moved to a virtual/dial-in format.

The meeting was facilitated by the consultant team (Pond & Company) project manager with the following agenda:

- Pigeonhole Live Introduction Poll
- Social Pinpoint Survey Results
- Need and Purpose Update and Review
- Overall Alignment/Trail Context Zone Types
- Enlargements of Trail/Alternate Alignments
- Trail Experience and Features
- Pigeonhole Live Q&A
- Stakeholder and Public Meeting Next Steps and Schedule

The meeting presentation and the recording of the Q+A session and can be found at [GwinnettTrails.com](http://GwinnettTrails.com). A summary of the interactive poll results and questions/answers recorded is included below.



## PUBLIC MEETING 2 INTRODUCTION POLL

What is your current association with The Loop study area?

I live and/or own property in the area.

I work and/or own a business in the area.

I am a frequent visitor.

I am an elected official who represents the community.

I am an appointed official who represents the community.

I am interested in the trail study process.

## QUESTION RESPONSES

<p>Q1: Can I get the slides? Specifically, the map slides if the trails existing and new?</p> <p>A1: Yes—the slides are available here: <a href="http://www.Gwinnetttrails.com">www. Gwinnetttrails.com</a></p>
<p>Q2: Will the presentation be available?</p> <p>A2: See Q1</p>
<p>Q3: Will the trails be handicap accessible?</p> <p>A3: It is a priority for Gwinnett County that our trails system is as inclusive and accessible as possible. Some trails that parallel roadways may be restricted to the existing slope along the roadway edge. When this occurs, the trail’s design will comply with all AASHTO requirements.</p>
<p>Q4: What is the timeline for development?</p> <p>A4: There is not yet a timeline for development of the Loop Trail. This study is a starting place to establish estimated project costs and to identify funding sources. Because segments of the trail already exist, there are portions of the trail that are likely to be implemented sooner than others. Implementation of the Loop Trail will depend on determined construction costs and available trail funding. Beyond this study, the Loop Trail will require final engineering design work as well as permitting.</p>
<p>Q5: Did you say when construction would start? Or expected to start?</p> <p>A5: See Q4</p>
<p>Q6: Are there any provisions in place to add tunnels/bridges at the major interchanges where crosswalks are currently planned? This is assuming the trail system becomes very popular.</p> <p>A6: There are trade-offs for implementing either a bridge or a tunnel, and often both options can be costly. In addition to costs, implementing bridges or tunnels is dependent on grades in the area as well as available property/easements.</p> <p>At this point, other than where the Loop Trail runs needs to cross the creek, there are not any plans for bridges or tunnels. If alternate funding is available and enough demands exists, bridges and tunnels may become options.</p> <p>In place of bridges or tunnels, Gwinnett will prioritize safe crossings at major intersections, which includes long-enough pedestrian cycles and other treatments to enhance the crosswalk.</p>

<p>Q7: Are we looking for easements or are we buying ROW?</p> <p>A7: Successfully implementing the Loop Trail will require a combination of both easements and acquiring right-of-way.</p>
<p>Q8: Any plans to expand at some point more into North Gwinnett?</p> <p>A8: The <a href="#">Gwinnett Countywide Trails Master Plan</a> features multiple trail segments in northern Gwinnett.</p> <p>The Loop Trail will provide connectivity to the Suwanee Creek Greenway, which connects to the Ivy Creek Greenway. The Ivy Creek Greenway will eventually connect to George Pierce Park as well as extend under the I-985/I-85 interchange.</p>
<p>Q9: I really love the presentation and the renderings. Thanks so much. It will make the parks accessible via walking or bicycle. It's always strange to drive to McDaniel Farm to go for a walk.</p> <p>A9: We are glad you enjoyed the presentation and renderings. Thank you for attending!</p>
<p>A10: What's the proposed cost to tax payers?</p> <p>A10: Currently, Gwinnett Trails are funded using SPLOST dollars as well as by leveraging state and federal funds and from grant sources. Gwinnett County is actively pursuing addition funding strategies to accelerate the implementation of the Countywide Trails Master Plan. A cost has not yet been determined for the Loop Trail, but the same funding strategies that are in place for the Gwinnett Trails system will be used for the Loop Trail.</p>
<p>A11: Will the apartments that have been approved affect the possibility of the alternate route in slide 9, utilizing the utility easement?</p> <p>A11: This development will be taken into consideration for the design of the Loop Trail.</p>
<p>Q12: What is the schedule for construction?</p> <p>A12: See Q4.</p>
<p>Q13: When will this be done?</p> <p>A13: The Loop Trail Study is estimated to be completed by the end of 2020. There is not yet an implementation timeline for the Loop Trail.</p>
<p>Q14: This is great Gwinnett needs this especially with current circumstances.</p> <p>A14: We appreciate your support of Gwinnett Trails!</p>

Q15: What will be the construction emphasis? Will you look to link existing infrastructure first to make orphan trails more valuable and increase usage?

A15: Existing infrastructure and trail connectivity will be prioritized for implementation. Some of the more challenging areas will also be examined for implementation prioritization as these segments may take the longest to be implemented.

Q16: How is this project funded?

A16: The Loop Trail Study has been funded in partnership by Gwinnett County and the Sugarloaf CID, as well as through a grant from the Atlanta Regional Commission. There is not yet a funding source identified to implement the Loop Trail.

Q17: Can you elaborate on what other improvements will be involved in sections along roadway? Lighting, landscaping??

A17: The [Gwinnett Countywide Trails Master Plan](#) outlines standards for the two trail typologies (Off Road and Side Path), which include lighting and other amenities. In general, these standards will be applied to the various segments of the Loop Trail.

Q18: What is the current Gwinnett standard for trail emergency location posts? Some parks/trails are very good, some not so good. Especially interested in more undeveloped areas.

A18 Gwinnett County is actively deploying help locator placards throughout our trails system and, in general, the help locator placards will be placed every ¼ mile along a trail. While the County has been working on deployment for the last few years, we have more than 130 miles of trails currently in existence that need to be retrofitted with these signs, as well as new trails being constructed. Gwinnett has plans to make significant progress in installing these placards in 2020, but full implementation across the system will take time. If there is a particular trail of interest, please let us know so we can consider it for future deployment plans.

Q19: Will the final trail surface include striping, STOP script, signs, etc.?

A19: The [Gwinnett Countywide Trails Master Plan](#) outlines standards for the two trail typologies (Off Road and Side Path), which include signage and markings. In general, these standards will be applied to the various segments of the Loop Trail.

Q20: Are you developing minimum standards for all phases of THE LOOP? Surface, signage, materials, dimensions etc.

A20: The [Gwinnett Countywide Trails Master Plan](#) outlines standards for the two trail typologies (Off Road and Side Path), which include surface materials, signage, trail widths, etc. In general, these standards will be applied to the various segments of the Loop Trail.

Q21: Does the County have usage expectations? Potential traffic impact upon parks and parking? Please compare to Big Creek Greenway.

A21: While we do not yet have usage estimates for the Loop Trail, the Loop Trail is one of nine Signature Trails in the [Gwinnett Countywide Trails Master Plan](#). Signature Trails will be the hallmarks of the Gwinnett Trails system. In addition to being a Signature Trail, the Loop Trail is considered to be our most activated trail system in Gwinnett, as demonstrated by the renderings in the Countywide Trails Master Plan.

Although it is difficult to estimate usage at this point in time, one of the objectives of the Loop Trail is to provide a transportation alternative in the area, which could potentially reduce parking demand as well as support traffic reduction.

For a comparison to the Big Creek Greenway (in North Fulton and Forsyth Counties), the Big Creek Greenway is a long section of trail that is completely off-road. It is more of a recreational pathway than what is envisioned for the Loop Trail. The Loop Trail will be more oriented to transportation usage, with the potential to provide critical first- and last-mile connectivity for transit service (both existing and potential).

Q22: The section along the floodzone you mentioned using boardwalk. May I suggest wood boardwalks and rain make it dangerous for bikers would prefer concrete or asphalt elevated.

A22: The County is exploring alternative materials for boardwalks for the Gwinnett Trails system, including PermaTrak (which was used by the City of Lilburn on the Camp Creek Greenway). Cost factors into material decision-making process, as well as other factors, including environmental impacts. In some cases, concrete or asphalt are not acceptable/allowable options due to environmental restrictions. Safety is a top priority for the County; however, most materials become slippery due to rain/saturated foliage, etc. Please use caution on trails after rain events.

Q23: What are the plans for connecting to other cities and counties? Specifically looking to be able to ride safely west of the Chattahoochee.

A23: Gwinnett County has been an active participant in the Chattahoochee RiverLands planning process, which concluded this April and recently released plan recommendations publicly at <https://chattahoocheeriverlands.com/>. The Gwinnett Countywide Trails Master Plan prioritized connectivity of the County's system with the 16 Cities and 6 CIDs, as well as with neighboring systems. In addition, Gwinnett was the first County in the region to incorporate the Chattahoochee RiverLands (formerly the Chattahoochee Trail Network/Greenway) into our trails vision, setting aside funding for implementation before the Chattahoochee RiverLands planning process even began.

The Chattahoochee RiverLands study proposes multiple connections to get users across the Chattahoochee River along Gwinnett's western boundary as well as features the Sugar Hill trailhead as one of the plan's catalytic sites. In addition to these planned crossing points, the County is currently partnering with the Cities of Duluth and Johns Creek as well as Fulton County to restore

Rogers Bridge, which will provide connectivity across the Chattahoochee that can be accessed by Loop Trail users via the Western Gwinnett Pathway. Gwinnett also is partnering with the City of Sandy Springs to provide sidewalks and trail connectivity over the River along Spalding Drive.

Beyond the regionally significant Chattahoochee RiverLands study, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is currently updating their Regional Trails Vision, which includes Gwinnett's trails (and the Chattahoochee RiverLands). The County is collaborating with ARC and our regional partners to ensure our planned trails system provides connectivity to other major Metro Atlanta networks

Q24: Will this new trail have any direct connection to the Gwinnett Center, Arena, etc.?

A24: There are plans for spur trails to this from this trail system.

A24: The Loop Trail Study is examining the trail's alignment and connections, but connecting major destinations by serving as a transportation alternative is a priority for the Loop Trail.

Q25: Would the trail be broken up into smaller segments for construction, and potentially added to future SPLOST programs?

A25: The Loop Trail Study is examining 14 miles of the proposed 17-mile Loop Trail. Fourteen miles is an extensive trail alignment, which will require phasing the implementation of the Loop Trail.