# Doodle Trail's grand opening

## Project represents unity between cities

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Break out your walking shoes and oil up your bicycle chain. It's almost time to hop aboard the Doodle Trail.

The opening for the 7.5-mile recreational trail that runs between the cities of Easley and Pickens has been set.

The big day is the Saturday before Memorial Day, just as planned when ground was broken in early February.

The trail is expected to be a tad short of complete on the northern end, but all systems are go from Easley to about ¾-mile from the old depot in Pickens.

A Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting Celebration has been scheduled for 10 a.m. at 514 Fleetwood Drive in Easley, at the trail's southern terminus.

"We are very excited about the opening of the Doodle Trail," said David Owens, mayor of Pickens. "This project represents a great partnership between Pickens and Easley, and we are looking forward to the positive impact this trail will have on our communities."

Officials in the two Pickens County towns have been watching in envy as the Swamp Rabbit Trail brought thousands of visitors into Greenville County and stimulated the opening of new businesses and raised property values along the trail.

Easley and Pickens officials hope to see the same thing happen along this trail, which follows the route of a defunct railroad the cities bought and converted for recreational use under the federal rails-to-trails program.

The cities split the $500,000 cost of buying the old rail line and the $1.9 million for paving, building and designing the trail.



# set for Saturday

The bonds they issued will be paid back out of hospitality taxes.

At the opening ceremony, the cities will unveil the Doodle Trail logo, which was chosen from among more than 60 entries in a contest.

"An exciting day for the cities of Easley and Pickens," Easley Mayor Larry Bagwell said. "This project has gone smoothly, thanks to many."

Officials of the two cities credit Blake Sanders with Alta Planning & Design and Mike Crenshaw of King Asphalt with "exceptional" work in making the trail become a reality on time.

"The Doodle Line carries a rich history of industry and economy important to both the city of Pickens and the city of Easley," the municipalities said in an announcement of the opening. "The Doodle Trail presents an opportunity to carry on the memory of this historic railroad and preserve the vital connection that was forged between Easley and Pickens over 120 years ago.

"Remember, this is just the beginning," Bagwell said, "not the ending."

For more information on the trail and the opening, call city hall in Pickens at 878-6421 or Easley at 855-7900.