



Virtually Hike Trail Town USA: Perinton's Crescent Trail to be Featured on Google Street View™ Mapping System

Local PR consultant partners with the Town of Perinton Recreation and Parks Department and Crescent Trail Hiking Association to capture 360-degree panoramic photos

ROCHESTER, N.Y., June 2, 2018—When local public relations consultant, Jenny LePore of ClockTower Communications, heard that the Google Street View™ mapping service was accepting proposals for new locations, she jumped on the opportunity to pitch Perinton, N.Y. As a resident and business owner, LePore saw it as an opportunity to highlight the community's 38-mile Crescent Trail system, which is known for its scenic views, diverse wildlife, and expansive footprint. It wasn't long before she received an acceptance letter noting that Google's Samsung Gear 360 was en route to "Trail Town USA," a title granted to the town in 1996 by the American Hiking Association. LePore is now collaborating with the Town of Perinton Recreation and Parks Department and the Crescent Trail Hiking Association (CTHA), a volunteer-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, to capture panoramic photographs of the trail.

With the 360-degree photographs on Google Maps™, online visitors will soon be able to "walk" the Crescent Trail footpaths as if in-person at the street view level. The images are set to publish on Google over the next few months, and a selection of photos are already available on the CTHA website (<http://www.crescenttrail.org>). The CTHA will also be posting updates on its newly launched [Instagram channel](#).

"This is an exciting project that reflects the natural beauty of our local community. Here we have this impressive trail system created, and maintained, by a group of dedicated volunteers [the CTHA] right in our own backyard," said Jenny LePore, Founder and Principal Consultant, ClockTower Communications. "For the first time, we'll be able to share these paths with an online audience and essentially, create a virtual hiking experience."

With National Trails Day on June 2, this project couldn't have come at a better time. "The Crescent Trail's system is so extensive—spanning throughout Perinton and even connecting with both the Erie Canal Heritage Trail and the RS&E Trolley Trail. With the help of the 360-degree camera views, we can now share those trails with people who may not have experienced them yet, and hopefully, encourage more folks to get outside and explore," Stacey Piddisi, Perinton Parks Director. "Many people, even Perinton residents, don't realize what unique features these trails have. We have hiking routes through former Christmas tree farms, wooded wetlands, and marshes. Some paths loop around ponds, streams, and even World War I bunkers. There are paths for everybody, no matter if you're a hiker, cross-country runner, or a family with young children."

The majority of paths along Crescent Trail are single line dirt trails, which you can choose to do a self-guided 2-hour hike or if you're up to it, stretch it out for a half day or full day hike. While the CTHA partners with the town of Perinton, the maintenance and integrity of the trail is reliant on volunteer efforts and community donations. CTHA volunteers plan, develop, and maintain the Crescent Trail footpaths. They lead monthly guided hikes, and the organization's "Silver Foxes" team meets every Wed from mid-April to mid-November to clear downed trees, mow and trim the trails, and build, as well as repair, more than 100 bridges, and structures. The organization's "Clips" team meets every Thursday from May to October to trim stray branches and overgrowth. While more than two-



thirds of the Crescent Trail is on publicly-owned land, it also crosses many privately-owned parcels as specified in easements and other agreements. Those portions of the trail will have limited imagery to respect to landowner privacy.

Dave Schaffer, a founding member of CTHA in 1980, is an active board member and has personally worked hard over the years to extend the trails across the entire town. Nicknamed one of the 'grandfathers' of Crescent Trail, Schaffer has even negotiated with homeowners to secure connecting paths in private backyards. The 10-person board meets once a month to discuss projects and new path initiatives.

"What do The Palace of Versailles, France, the Grand Canyon, and Stonehenge have in common with The Crescent Trail of Perinton? They are all on Google Street View," says Sue Geiger of the CTHA Board with excitement. "The Crescent Trail all began because of a grassroots movement from a very active and concerned group of citizens who advocated for the preservation of natural surrounding in the late 1970's. Today, the trails cross town-owned and private property allowing hikers, trail runners, and every day people like you and me to escape from the stresses of life and enjoy nature at its best. Having it now featured on Google will only help to further showcase some of its natural beauty and the hard work of our community volunteers."

LePore, and other volunteers from the Parks and CTHA teams, are capturing images with a helmet camera and tablet, walking in solitude along the paths. A selection of 360-degree images are already published for Crescent Trail paths within Indian Hill, McCord Woods, Kreag Road Park and Howell Road Park. The remaining routes of Crescent Trail will be published by the end of the summer.

To date, Google has collected Street View footage from a number of places within New York State, including Richmond, Kings, Queens, New York City, Bronx, Rockland, Westchester, Suffolk, and Erie counties, among others. LePore's 360-degree panoramic photos will supplement the current satellite imaging of the Crescent Trail footpath system. To learn more about Perinton and the CTHA, be sure to visit the town website at <http://www.perinton.org/Departments/Parks/hikingctha>

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