



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release:

Aug. 19, 2016

Google loans out Street View Trekker to Zionsville Parks & Recreation

In an effort to map parts of the world where cars can't go, Google is working with local organizations to gather imagery of parks and trails

“Armchair travelers” will soon be able to explore Zionsville’s parks and hiking trails from the comforts of their home.

Since Wednesday, the Zionsville Parks & Recreation Department has walked through Zionsville’s parks and trails with the Google Trekker – a 50-pound backpack fitted with 15 cameras that take 360-degree panoramic pictures. The department is using golf carts and their own two feet to map the region’s connected trails, including the Big Four Rail Trail, Starkey Park, Heritage Trail Park, Creekside Nature Park, Elm Street Green, Zion Nature Sanctuary, Mulberry Park and Carter Station. These high-resolution images will be added to the popular Google Maps platform.

While Google Street View showcases images of roads worldwide on Google Maps, Trekker technology uses a backpack to capture photos of parks and other scenic destinations. This technology provides an enhanced way for visitors to connect with places in the U.S. they may never be able to explore in person.

“This grants virtual access to Zionsville’s parks to anyone,” said Matt Dickey, Superintendent of Parks and Recreation. “Those who have not yet seen our park system can check it out and plan their routes before they go. And people traveling here from across the world can see all that Zionsville has to offer recreationally.”

Under an agreement between Google and the Indiana Parks and Recreation Association, the Trekker is touring 35 departments across Indiana. Now people will be able to take in scenic locations closer to home as the Parks & Recreation Department captures footage of Zionsville trails and parks.

“The Trekker was designed to go where cars can’t go, which will allow people to virtually walk the trails,” said Dickey. “It took considerable effort to shoot the original footage on portions of our 400+ acres and over 18 miles of pathways, but I am very excited to share our beautiful parks and trail system in this unique way.”

The project will appear on Google Street View in six months to a year.

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