

Contributor Guidelines

Mapping our Story of Place



The Genesee Valley Map Guide Project

The background of the left side of the slide is a topographic map with contour lines and a grid. The text is overlaid on this background.

The Genesee Valley Map
Guide Project is based on
the principles of
Geotourism

*Geotourism is tourism that
“sustains or enhances the
geographic character of a
place its environment,
culture, aesthetics,
heritage, and the well
being of its residents.”*

What is a Geotourism Map Guide Project?

The Geotourism Map Guide Program was launched by **National Geographic** in 2002 as a tool to help communities work together to create a shared identity and market their destinations in a way that both promotes and preserves their region's natural assets and residents' quality of life.

A Map Guide is designed to be ***a living guide to the region***. As such the process involves working with community members to continually identify, develop, and authentically communicate our unique story of place. The resulting product is an interactive digital platform that helps connect travelers with the many attractions, businesses and activities that capture the region's distinct character, heritage and beauty.

The communities of Perry, Mount Morris and Geneseo launched this project in 2018 to begin building a shared regional identity anchored to **Letchworth, sustainability** and the **Genesee Valley Region's natural assets**.

The **ultimate goal** of the Map Guide Geotourism Project is to **promote economic stability** for the communities within the region and to **foster a shared identity** that encourages collaboration, **inspires stewardship** and **improves residents' quality of life**.

How does the process work?

Step 1: Build Destination Awareness

Crowd-source community contributions of sites, attractions and businesses that capture the region's unique character, heritage and beauty.

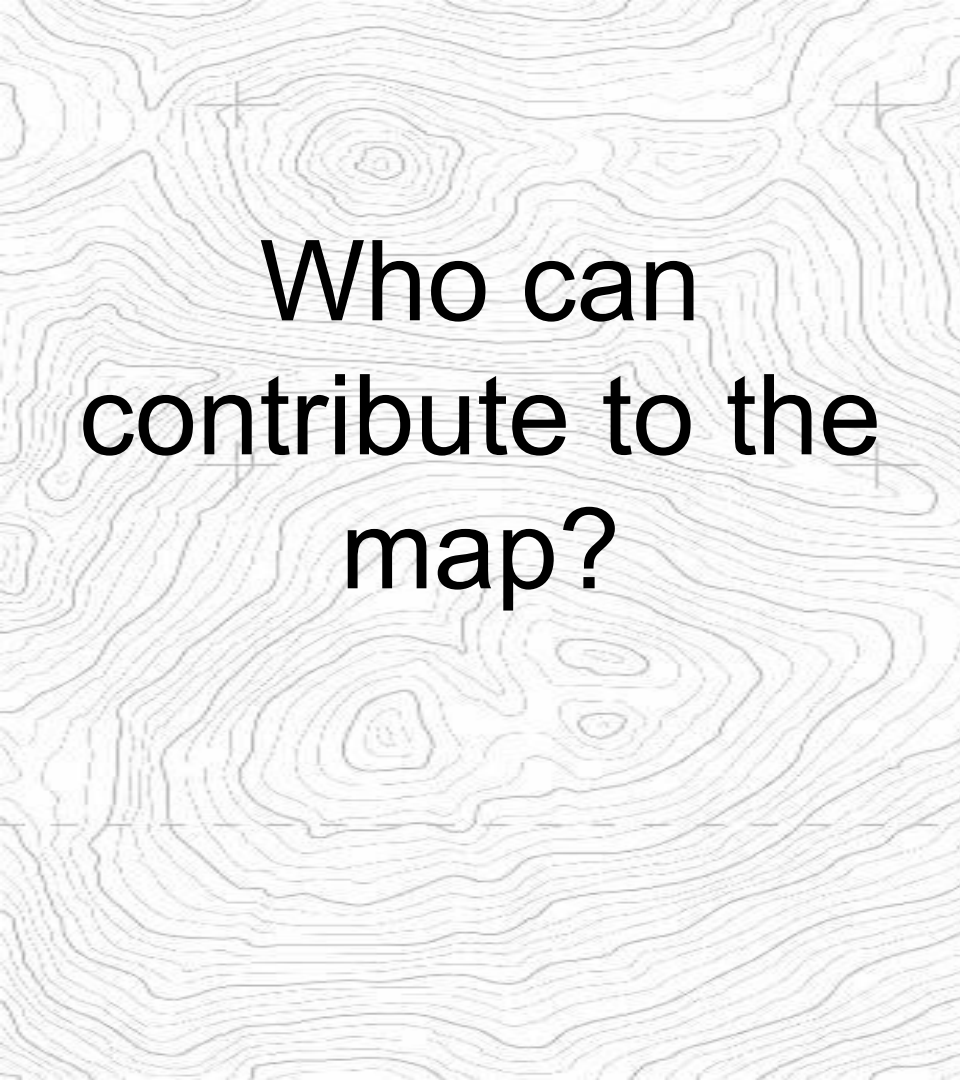
Step 2: Define our Destination Identity or Brand

Work with community contributors, project stakeholders and Geotourism branding consultants to review nominations and select those that best define who we are as a region.

Step 3: Create a Digital Map Guide that tells our Unique Story of Place

Publish selected content to the digital Map Guide and begin promoting our destination!

Continue adding new places to the Map Guide so it remains a living guide to the region.

A background image of a topographic map with contour lines and a grid of latitude and longitude lines. The text is overlaid on the left side of the map.

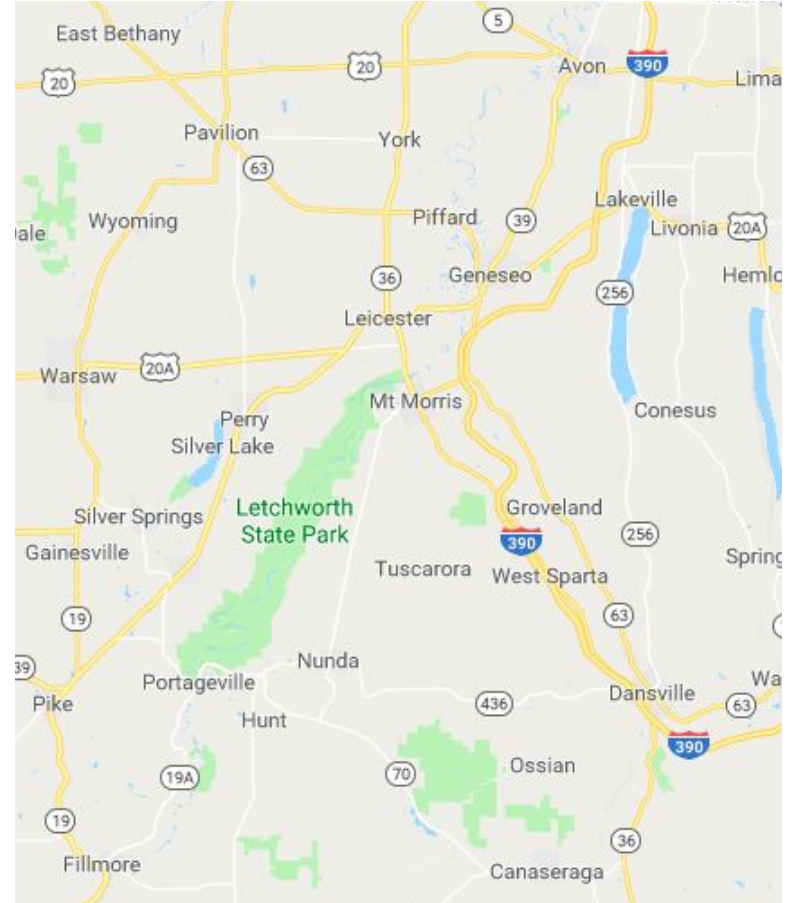
Who can contribute to the map?

Local people, businesses, and organizations are all invited to nominate points of interest, tourism related businesses and unique experiences for potential inclusion on the Greater Letchworth Map Guide.

What can I put on the map?

The Genesee Valley Map Guide is designed to highlight authentic and distinctive attractions, businesses, activities, people, and experiences that represent and capture the unique character and beauty of the Genesee Valley / Letchworth Region.

Residents may add any point of interest located within a 20 mile radius of Letchworth State Park in Livingston, Wyoming, Genesee, Allegany or Monroe County within a 20 mile radius of Letchworth State Park and part of the Genesee River Watershed area.



Types of Nominations

Attractions

Includes:

Points of Interest (POIs), Parks, Hiking Trails, farmer's markets, people, etc.

Who can contribute?

Anyone

Describes the "attractions" in the destination

Tourism-related Businesses

Includes:

restaurants, accommodation, services, shopping, equipment rental, etc.

Who can contribute? Someone who is associated with the business or designated by the owner to represent them

Describes a particular business and their products and services

Events


Includes:

community events, volunteer opportunities, festivals, etc.

Who can contribute?


Someone who is associated with the event or designated by the organizers to represent them

Describes a particular event or festival in the region

A background image of a topographic map with contour lines and crosshair markers.

What is appropriate to contribute?

- **Places** - featuring local cuisine and locally sourced and sustainable culinary products and goods such as traditional markets, shops and restaurants
- **Remarkable natural areas** - and features such as rivers, lakes, wetlands, landscapes, natural formations, geology, waterfalls, forests, overlooks, viewpoints
- **Locally owned and family business** - like unique lodging, cafes and bars, culture, recreation and tour operators
- **Distinctive wildlife habitats** –and notable species of birds, mammals, flowers, reptiles or trees


A background image of a topographic map with contour lines and crosshair markers.

What is appropriate to contribute?

- **Events** – music, community, ceremonies and festivals that highlight the community’s heritage and traditions
- **Cultural experiences** - indigenous communities, music and performing arts, living culture
- **Outdoor experiences** - sites for biking, boating, hiking, birding, kayaking, horseback riding, fishing, watchable wildlife
- **Scenic routes** - including hiking trails, bike routes, birding trails, boating, historic, cultural
- **Community** – districts, architecture, conservation or restoration initiatives, interpretive centers, museums, theaters, venues

Checklist for Appropriate Entries

- ❑ Geographic site is located within a 20 mile radius of Letchworth State Park and is part of the Genesee River watershed.
- ❑ Meets criteria under “What is appropriate to contribute?”
(see previous 2 slides)
- ❑ The spot, attraction, business, activity or experience is distinctive to our town, area or region, and is authentic to the Genesee Valley / Letchworth Region.
- ❑ The site is open to the public. (IMPORTANT: contributors may not add places where the public is prohibited access)

A background image of a topographic map with contour lines and a grid of small crosses.

What happens after I make an entry?

Once we receive your entry our editorial team will review it and make any necessary edits to ensure that it is appropriate to publish and meets quality standards.

**Please note that final decisions about wording and site selection will be determined by an editorial committee comprised of Letchworth Gateway Villages project sponsors and formal community partners.*

To learn more about becoming a partner or sponsor contact: info@exploregenesevalley.com

Thank you for helping us promote our region!



*For additional guidance on how to become a Map Guide contributor
please contact:*

Nicole Manapol, Letchworth Gateway Villages Director
info@exploregenesevalley.com or (585) 237-8079