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St. Petersburg City Officials Caught Trying to Fool Locals With Photoshop

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Lakhta Online / Vkontakte

Locals in St. Petersburg are accusing city officials of trying to pass off photo-edited images of a walkway as evidence of completed remodeling that never actually took place, according to a community on the Russian social network Vkontakte.

In March 2015, residents of St. Petersburg's Primorsky district began complaining en masse that a popular footpath had fallen into disrepair, with deep potholes that frequently created enormous, impassable puddles.

Two months later, city officials issued a public response, declaring that the walkway's condition was satisfactory, though renovations would be made before October 15, 2016, officials promised.

On October 31, 2016, the government announced that it had completed the repairs to the footpath, sharing photographs online showing the walkway now paved with fresh asphalt.

On November 2, however, local Internet users reported that the footpath is just as wrecked as before, and that the photographs uploaded to the city's website are doctored. On social media, locals joked that state officials must have decided it would be cheaper to hire a good graphic designer to edit some pictures, instead of an actual construction crew.

Following the revelations on Vkontakte, St. Petersburg city officials suddenly became inaccessible to local journalists, according to the Fontanka news website.

The photographs uploaded to the city's website have also disappeared.

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