Visualize your own data in the County Web Map

The "Add Data" tool in the St Mary's County Public GIS Map can be a powerful tool to let you visualize your own data in the map and compare it to county data.

The tool accepts several different kinds of files, such as:

- Shapefiles (.SHP) – This is a standardized and common file type used by mapping professionals. Many State and Federal agencies will make data available for download by the public in this format.
- .CSV – This is just a simple text file, where each line represents a specific place, and specific information about that place is stored separated by commas. Locations can be identified by either address or latitude/longitude. Spreadsheet programs will allow you to save a spreadsheet as a CSV file.
- .KML – Originally created for use in Google Earth, this is a common file type for storing simple geographic data.
- .GPX – This file type is the standard used by most handheld GPS units. Many smartphone apps which allow users to track their hike or run will export your path in this format, which consists of a series of closely spaced points.
- GeoJSON – This is an uncommon file type usually used only by web developers.

Tutorial: Create a CSV file of a list of addresses and load them into the Public GIS map.

Step 1 - As an example, we are going to create a spreadsheet of a short list of County facilities in Microsoft Excel. Click here if you would like to download this sample data.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	ADDRESS	STATE	TYPE	STORIES	AGE
2	23115 Leonard Hall Rd	MD	Office	4	100
3	22156 Three Notch Rd	MD	Museum	2	4
4	37600 New Market Rd	MD	Library	1	30

The Red fields indicate those which are required. You must have both the street address and the state and they must be separate fields. You can include the city and zip as separate fields if you have them, but they are not required.

The blue fields are optional. In this example there are three fields which give extra information about each address. These fields can be titled anything you want, and you may have as many or as few optional fields as you need.
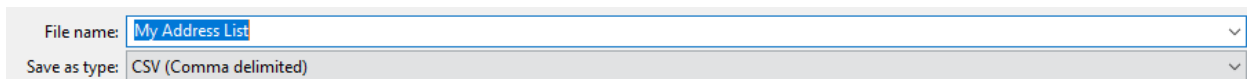
You may include up to 250 lines in the spreadsheet. Addresses may be duplicated if required.

Alternative - Latitude/Longitude

In place of an address and state field, you can use a lat and long field. Latitude and longitude must be expressed as decimal degrees as illustrated below. If your information is stored as degrees, minutes, seconds, there are many websites that will let you calculate the conversion. If you do not know the latitude/longitude of your locations, you can use the Public GIS Map. The lower left corner will display the coordinates of your mouse cursor on the map.
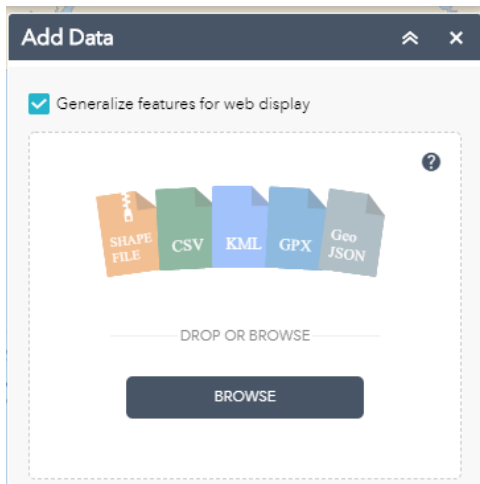

Step 2 – Use File -> Save As to save your spreadsheet. Choose "CSV (Comma Delimited)" in the Save as Type dropdown before clicking "Save".

**Step 3** – Drag the file into the box in the Add Data tool in the map. Alternatively, click the browse button to locate the file in your file system.

Step 4 – The map will show a point located at each of the addresses included in your file. Clicking on a point will show a popup with all the fields included in your spreadsheet. There will also be an "Objectid" field, which is a randomly assigned number the system uses to differentiate points. It is not removeable.
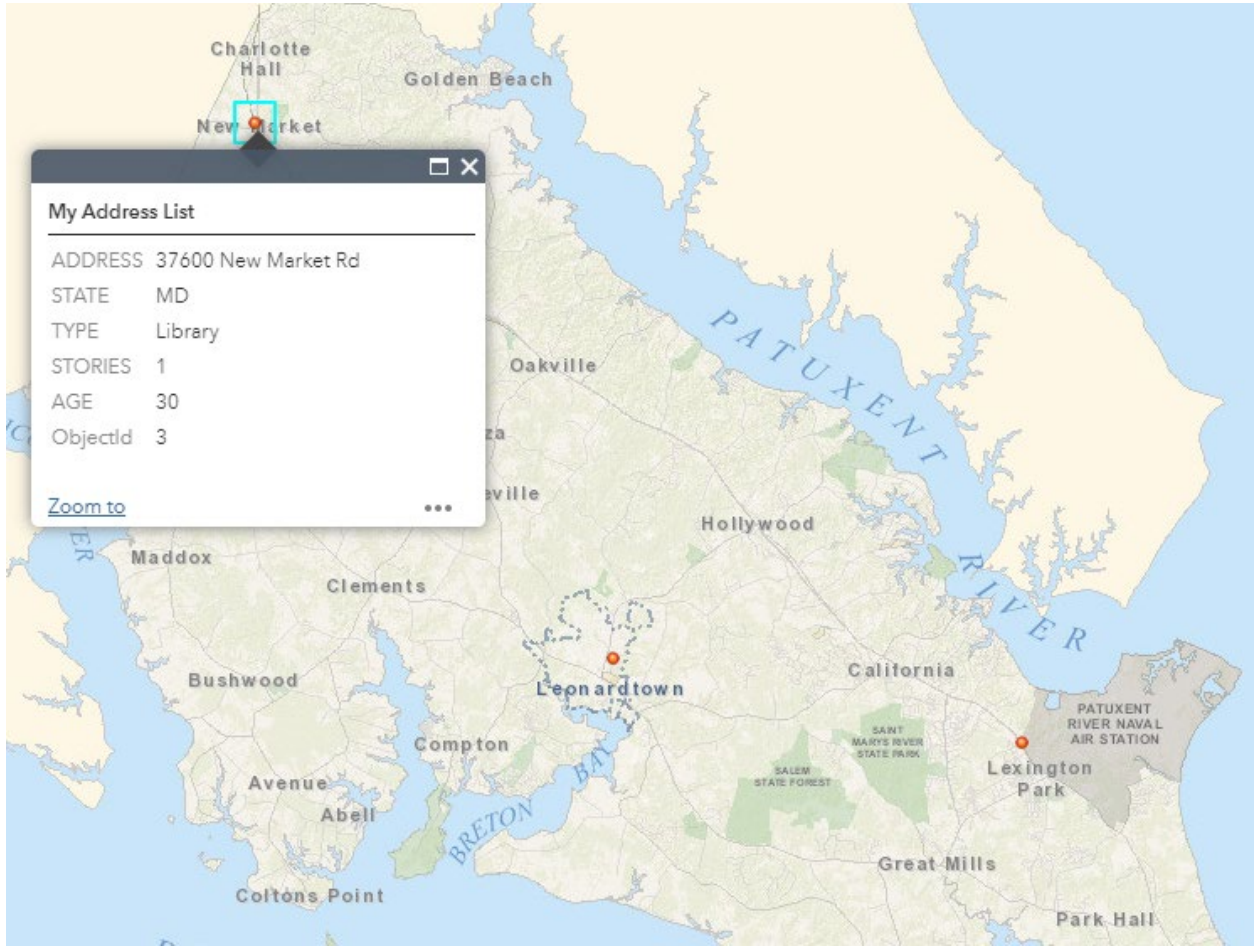
Additional Notes

- When uploading a .csv, address or latitude/longitude are the only way to specify a location. Unfortunately, there is not currently a way to use tax ID or map/parcel reference.
- Once you load your data, it is converted to be its own layer in the map. You can find your layer at the top of the Layer List. You can use the checkbox to visually turn your layer on or off.
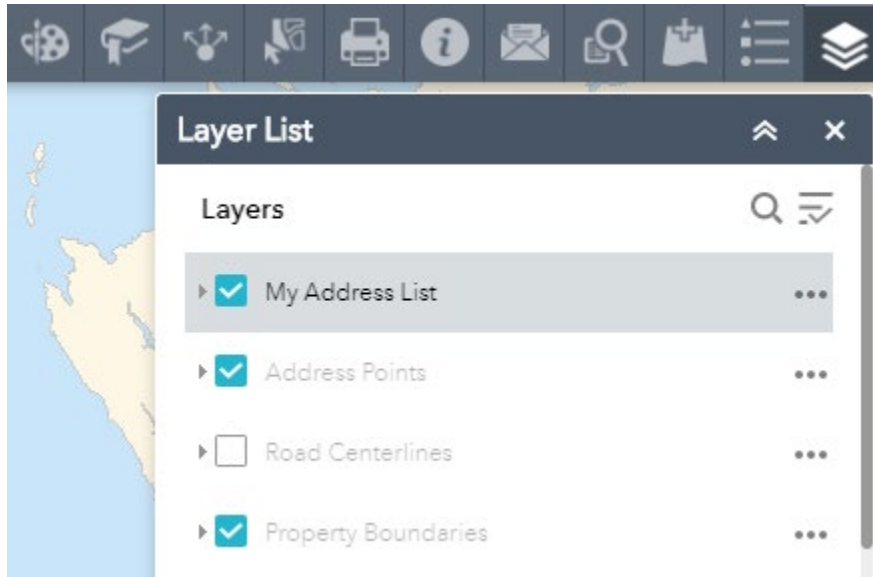
- You can load as many different layers as you want during your map session. Each time you use the Add Data tool, it will create a new layer in the layer list.
- If you close your browser window with the map, your layer will not be present when you reopen the map. You will need to reload the file into the map using the Add Data tool again.
- There is currently no way to share a link with another person that will include your points. You can use the print tool to create a PDF of your map or send the original file to the other recipient for them to load in their own map.
- Your data is not sent to the County. In fact, your data never leaves your machine. All the work to display the points is being done within your web browser. The data is not saved anywhere, and as soon as you close the browser tab, all the data is lost.

Microsoft Excel Alternatives

- Any spreadsheet application such as Apple Numbers or Open Office should allow you to save or export your list as a .csv
- Many web-based spreadsheet programs, such as Google Sheets, allow for you to download a .csv version of your spreadsheet.
- You can use any text editing program, such as Notepad, to manually create a csv from a text file. A .csv is simply a text file formatted a specific way. Each line represents a specific place, and specific information about that place is stored separated by commas. Once you have saved the file, simply change the file extension from .txt to .csv. See the below example, which is the same as the spreadsheet shown earlier.

ADDRESS,STATE,TYPE,STORIES,AGE
23115 Leonard Hall Rd,MD,Office,4,100
22156 Three Notch Rd,MD,Museum,2,4
37600 New Market Rd,MD,Library,1,30