



# US Department of Transportation



## FY 2026 BUILD - Location Designations

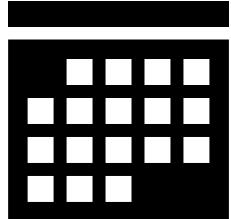


# Agenda

- What are BUILD location designations?
- How do you determine the location designations for your project?
- What if your project crosses multiple designations?
- How to prepare a spatial file to submit with your application.



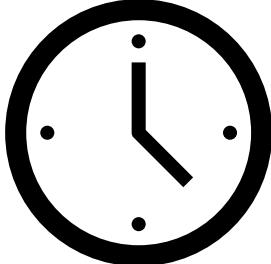
# FY 2026 BUILD NOFO



Notice of Funding Opportunity is **OPEN**

**Grants.gov Opportunity Number:** [DTOS59-26-RA-BUILD](#)

**Assistance Listing:** 20.933



**APPLY by February 24, 2026, at 5:00 pm Eastern**

Must be submitted electronically through **Valid Eval at:**

[Capital Projects](#)

[Planning Projects](#)

**No late applications accepted**



# What are BUILD Location Designations?



# BUILD Location Designations

BUILD location designations are:

- **Urban or Rural**
- **Area of Persistent Poverty/Historically Disadvantaged Community**

These location designations affect the Federal share limit, minimum award size, and funding distribution:

Location Designations	Cost Share Requirement	Minimum Request	Funding Restriction
Urban	Up to 80% Federal funding	Capital - \$5M Planning - none	50%
Rural		Capital - \$1M Planning - none	50%
Area of Persistent Poverty (APP)/Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC)	Up to 100% Federal funding	- - -	At least 1%



# Urban and Rural Definitions



## Urban

Census Urban Areas with Population Greater than 200,000



## Rural

Census Urban Areas with Population Less than 200,000  
Outside a Census Urban Area

**Urban area boundaries and population are based on the 2020 Census**

- Not based on other geographic boundary (city, county, etc.)

Click [here](#) for a **display** of qualifying urban areas.



# Definitions

## Areas of Persistent Poverty (APP) and Historically Disadvantaged Communities (HDC)

- Based on **Census Tract or County** level poverty data and includes all **US territories**.

Click [here](#) to view the full definitions for APP/HDC.

Click [here](#) for a **display** of APP/HDC areas.

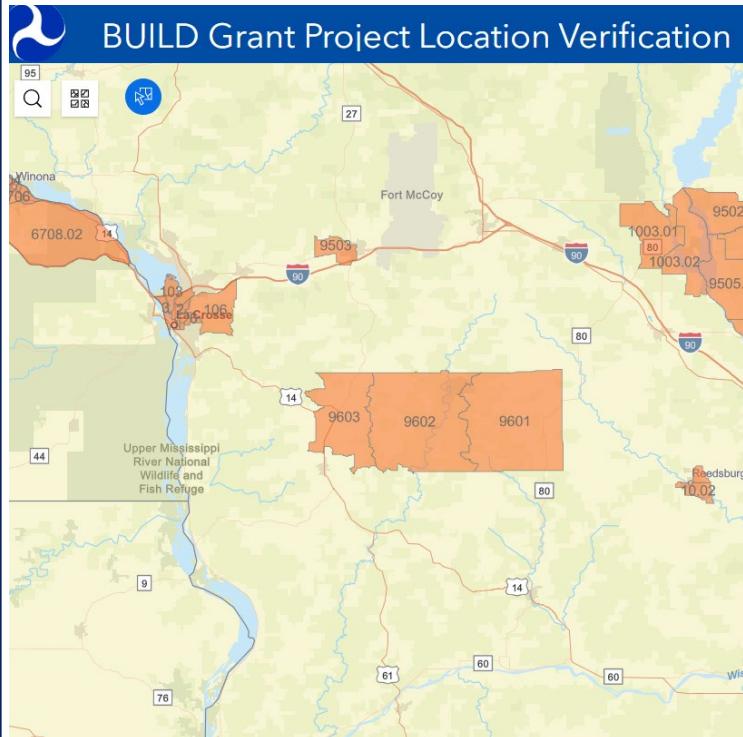


How do you determine the location designations for your project?



# BUILD Grant Project Location Verification Tool

An interactive map developed by the BUILD program to help you identify:



Areas of Persistent Poverty/Historically Disadvantaged Communities

Persistent Poverty Counties (2020 Census)

Persistent Poverty Census Tracts (2020 Census)

Urban areas

Census Designated Urban Areas with a Population Greater Than 200,000 (2020 Census)

Geographies

Counties (2020 Census)

Census Tracts (2020 Census)



# BUILD Grant Project Location Verification Tool

BUILD Grant Project Location Verification

Example Project

Activate groups and layers by clicking the eye icon.

All elements are off by default. You will need to activate both the *group* and the *layer* to see the data.

Map Layers

- Areas of Persistent Poverty and Historically Disadvantaged Communities
- Urban Areas
- Census Tracts and Counties

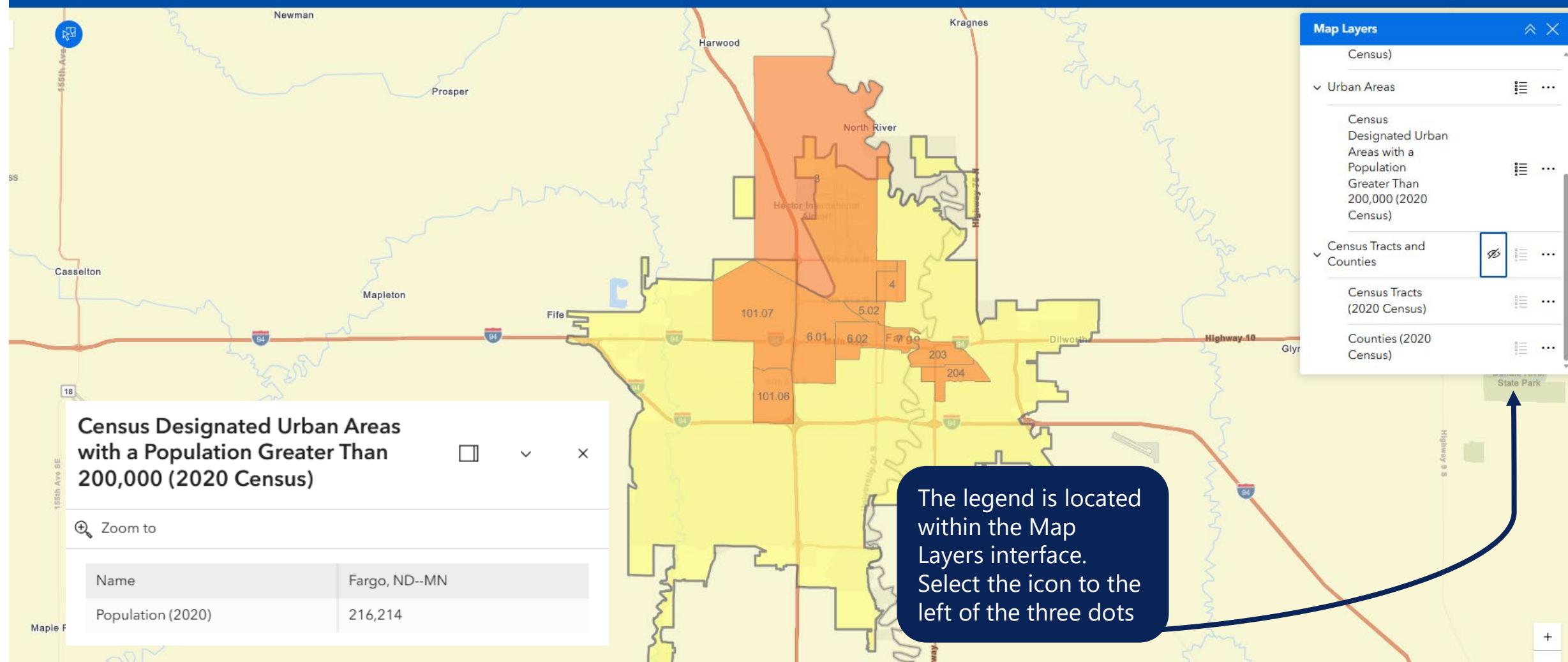
Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, USFWS

Powered by Esri



# BUILD Grant Project Location Verification Tool

## BUILD Grant Project Location Verification





# BUILD Grant Project Location Verification Tool

## BUILD Grant Project Location Verification

Map Layers

- Communities
  - Persistent Poverty Census Tracts (2020 Census)
  - Persistent Poverty Counties (2020 Census)
- Urban Areas
  - Census Designated Urban

Map Layers

Communities

- Persistent Poverty Census Tracts (2020 Census)
- Persistent Poverty Counties (2020 Census)

Urban Areas

- Census Designated Urban

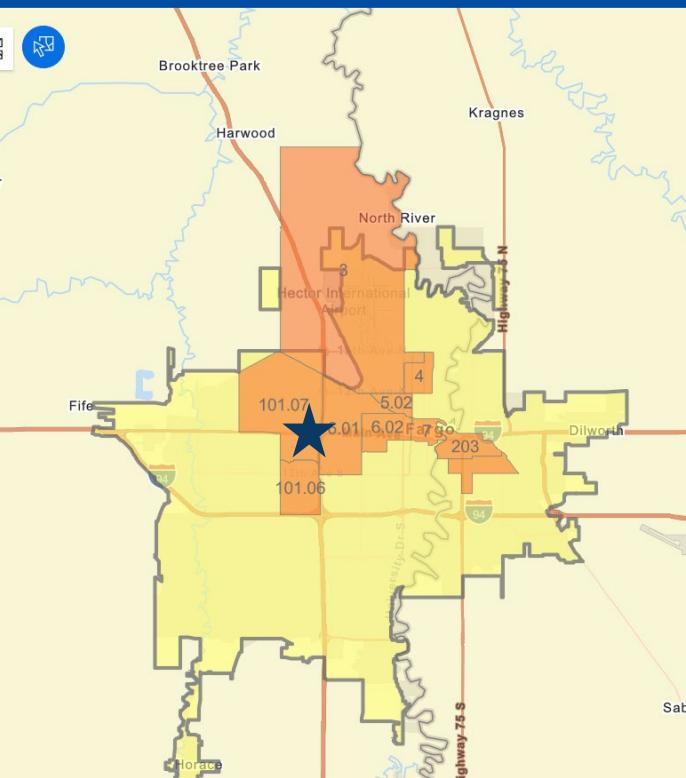
Example Project

Click on the layer on the map to see more information. (It will highlight and change color.)



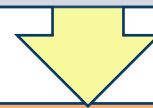
# Recommended Process for Determining Location Designations

## BUILD Grant Project Location Verification



**Step 1:** Verify if your project is in an **Urban** area using this layer:

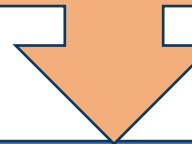
**Census Designated Urban Areas with a Population Greater Than 200,000 (2020 Census)**



**Step 2:** Verify if your project is in an **Area of Persistent Poverty / Historically Disadvantaged Community** using these layers:

**Persistent Poverty Census Tracts (2020 Census)**

**Persistent Poverty Counties (2020 Census)**



**Step 3:** Verify the **county(ies)** your project is in using this layer:

**Counties (2020 Census)**



**Step 4:** Verify the **census tract(s)** your project is in using these layers:

**Census Tracts (2020 Census)**



What if your project crosses multiple designations?



# What if your project crosses multiple designations?

Projects that cross **multiple areas with differing designations** (urban and rural, APP/HDC and non-APP/HDC) will have their **designation based on where the majority of costs are incurred**.

The *Project Budget* file should include these **tables**:

2020 Census Tract(s)	Project Costs per Census Tract
[XX.XX]	\$
	Total Project Cost: \$

*Note: Please reference the Census Tracts (2020 Census) layer in the BUILD Grant Project [Location Verification mapping tool](#). Additional rows may be added if necessary.*

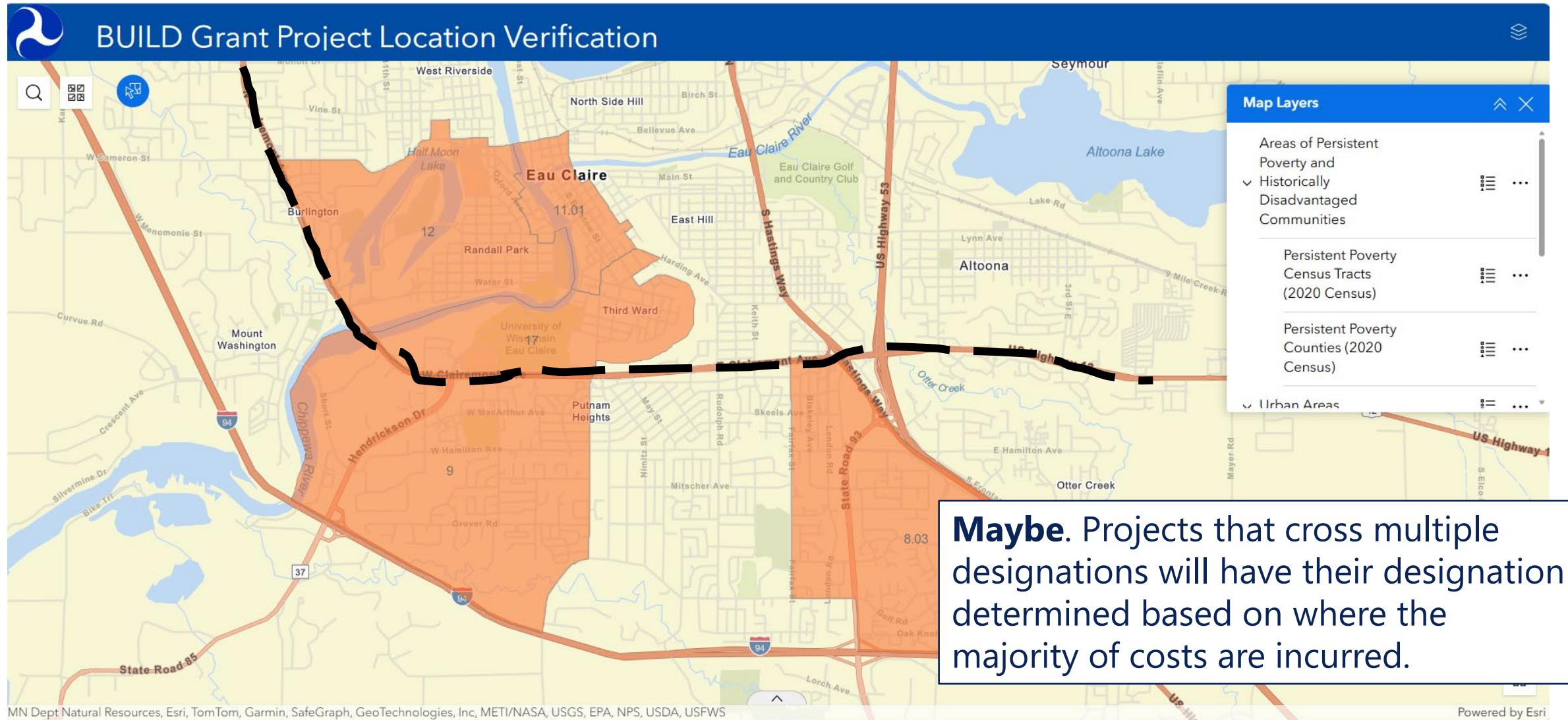
Urban and Rural	Project Costs
Urban (2020 Census-designated urban area with a population greater than 200,000)	\$
Rural (Located outside of a 2020 Census-designated urban area with a population greater than 200,000)	\$
	Total Project Cost: \$

*Note: Please reference the Census Designated Urban Areas with Population Greater Than 200,000 (2020 Census) layer in the BUILD Grant Project [Location Verification mapping tool](#).*



# Location Designation Examples

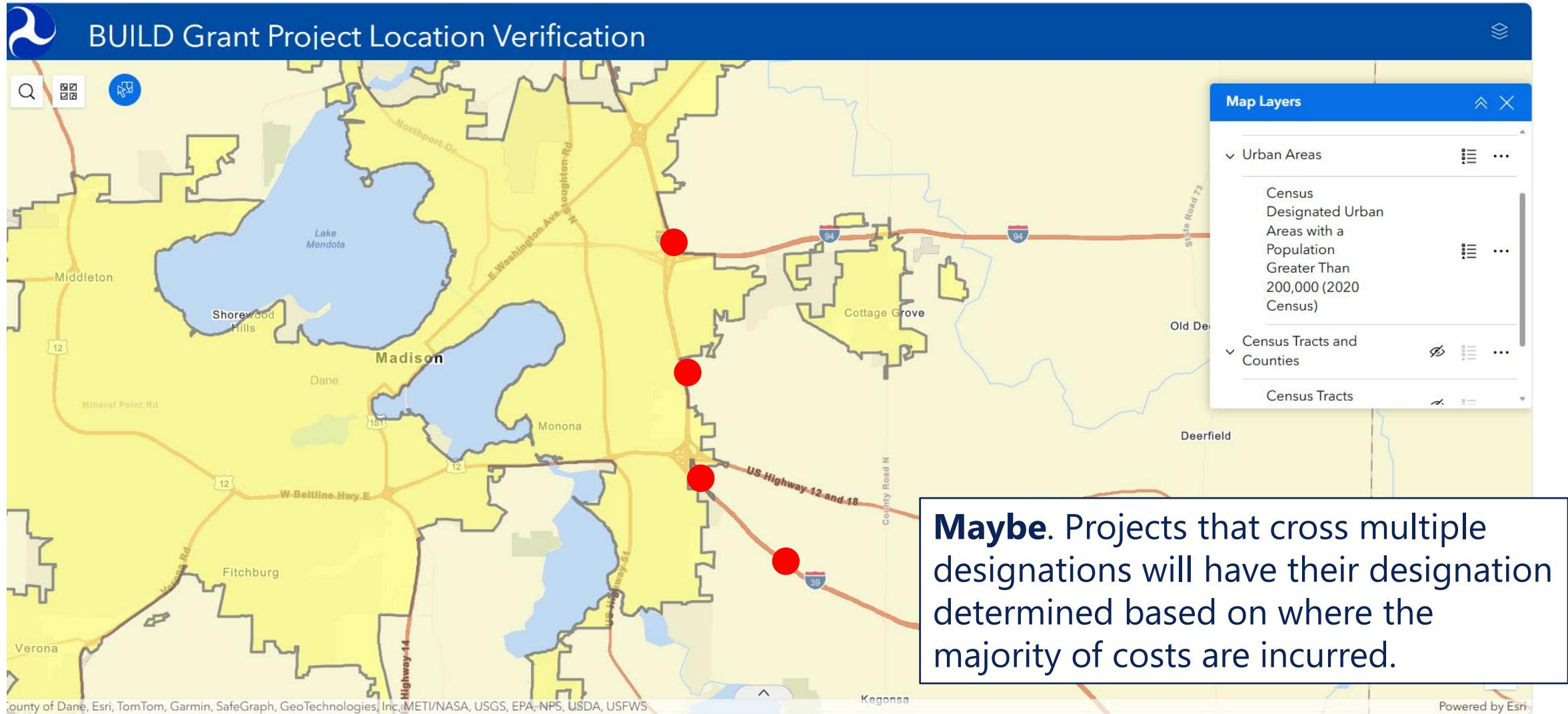
**Example #1:** Would this project (dashed line) receive an APP/HDC designation?





# Location Designation Examples

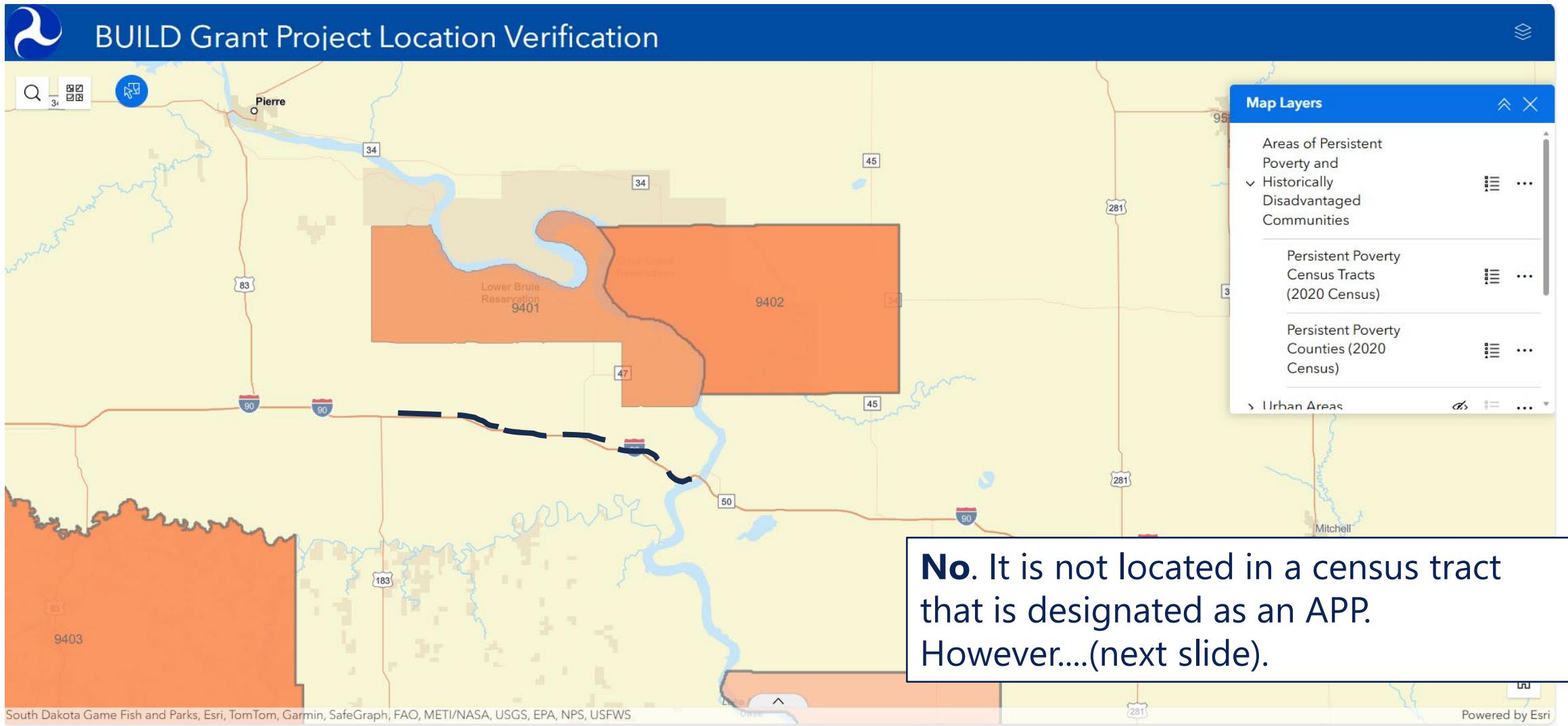
**Example #2:** Would this project (red dots) receive an Urban designation?





# Location Designation Examples

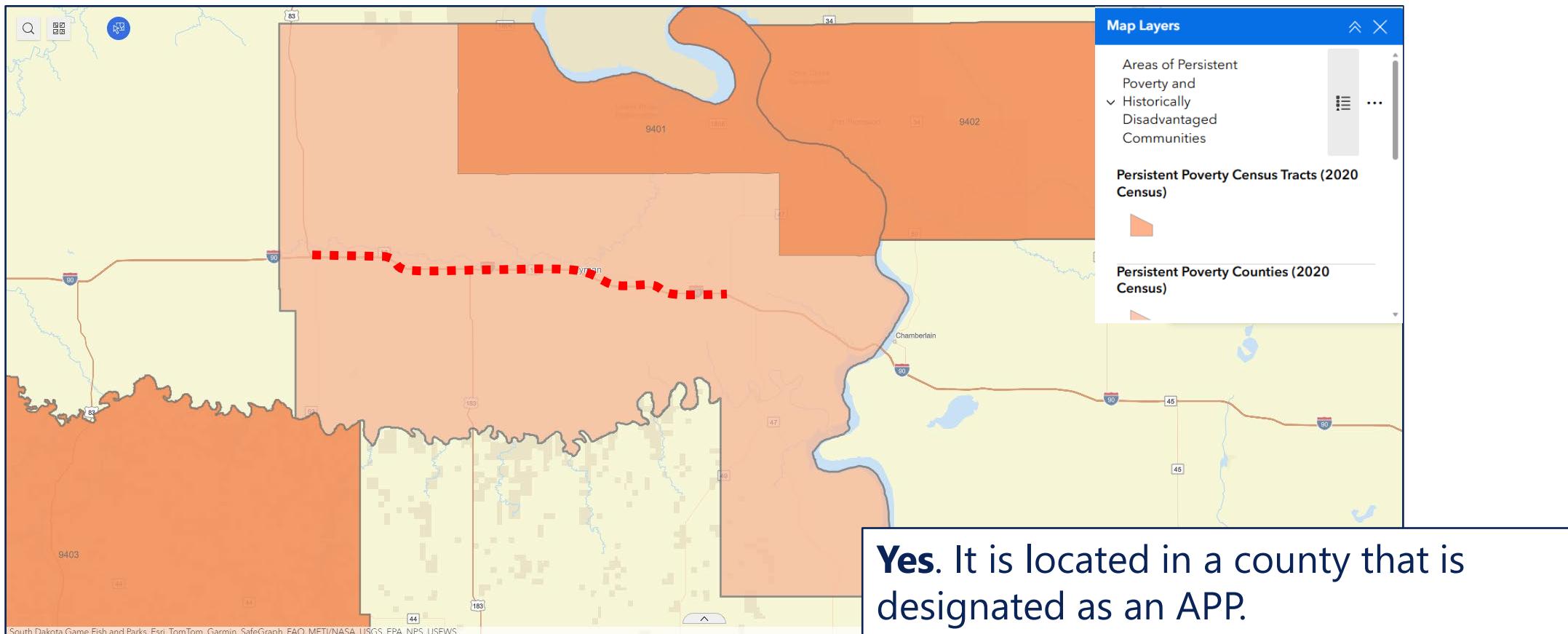
**Example #3:** Would this project (dashed line) receive an APP designation?





# Location Designation Examples

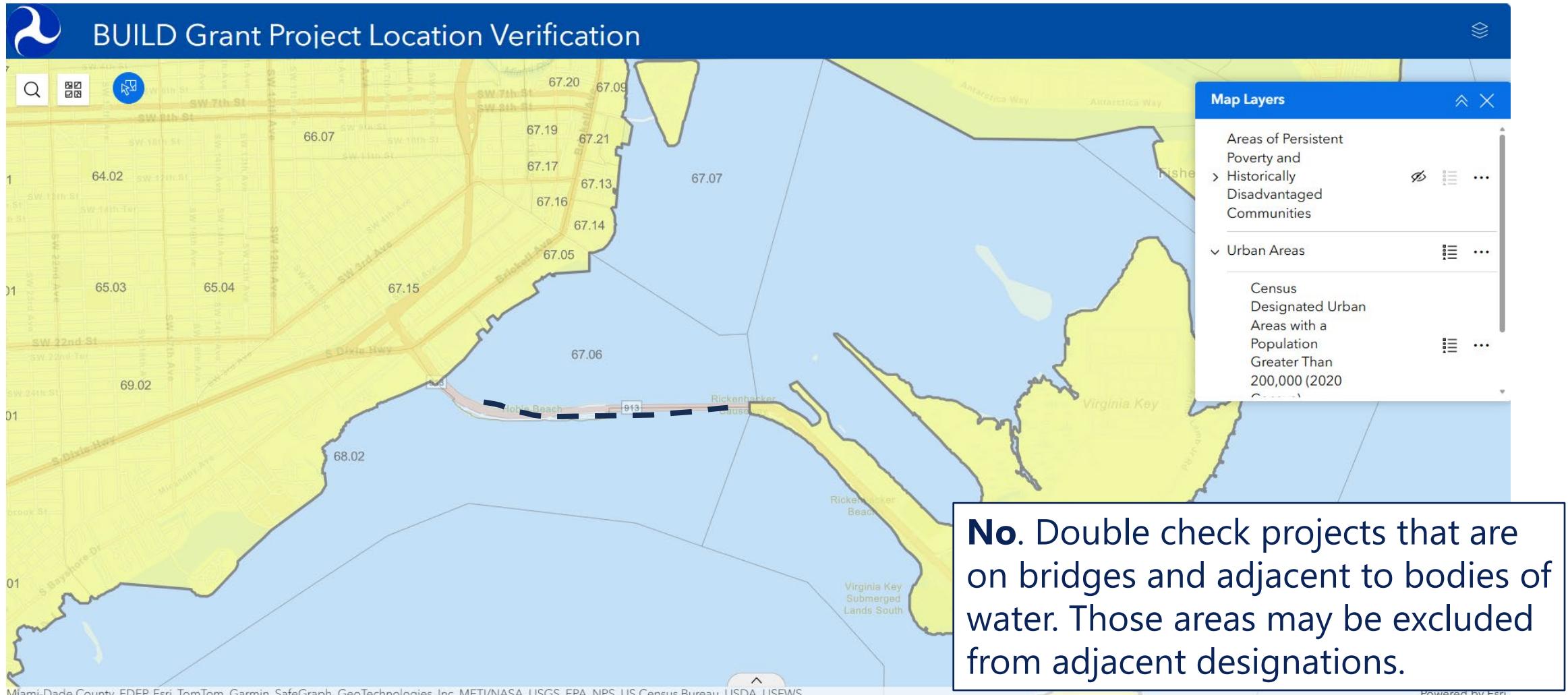
## Example #3





# Location Designation Examples

**Example #4:** Would this project (dashed line) receive an Urban designation?





# How to Prepare a Spatial File to Submit with your Application



# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

- Applicants **must** submit one of the following spatial files that displays their project's location:
  - Shapefile (compressed to a .zip file containing at least the .shp, .shx, .dbf, and .prj components of the Shapefile); OR
  - a KML or KMZ file
- **Spatial files should include only the direct physical location of the project, and not a broad service area or area of impact.**





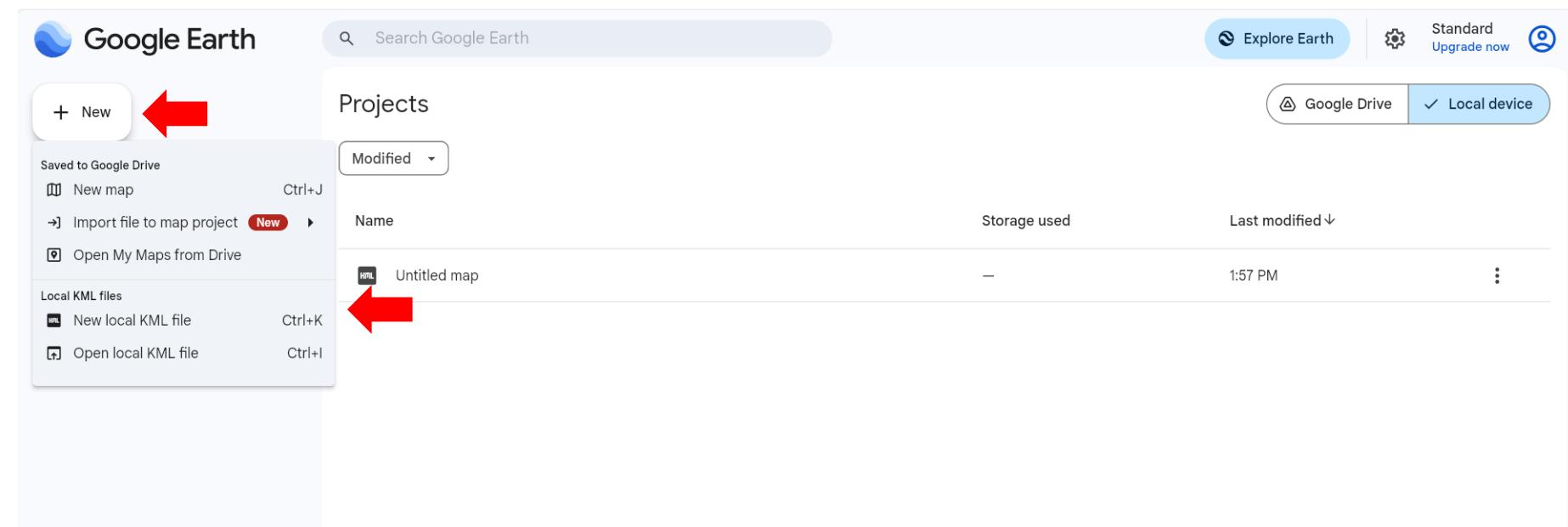
# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**Example:** Use Google Earth (<https://earth.google.com/web/>), an open-source software

**Step 1)** Open Google Earth.



**Step 2)** Click **New** then select **New Local KML file**. This will take you to the map where you will create your spatial file.

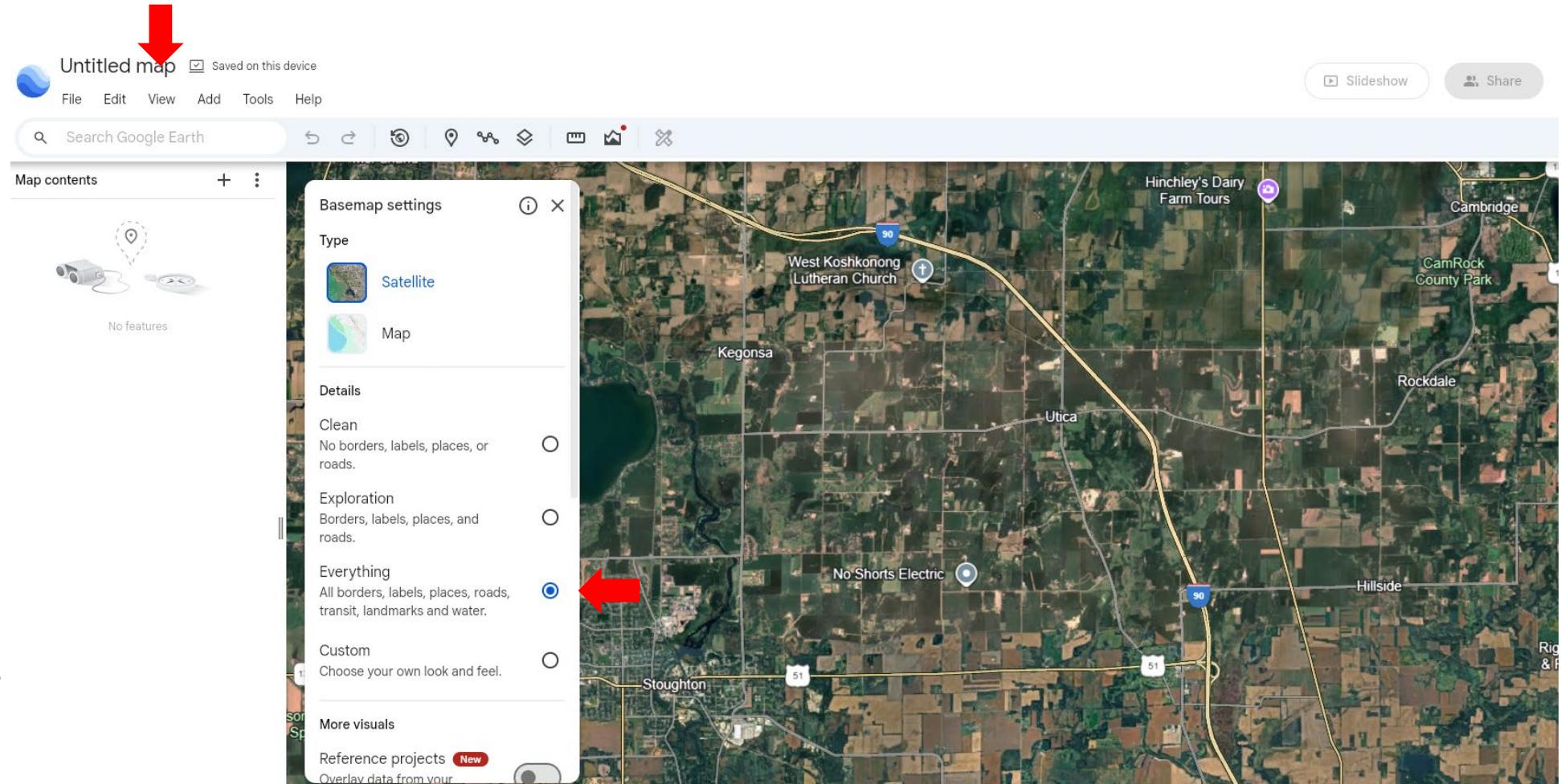




# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**Example:** Use Google Earth (<https://earth.google.com/web/>), an open-source software

**Step 3) Click View**  
then select  
**Basemap Settings.**  
This will open a  
menu that allows  
you to select which  
layers the map  
displays.



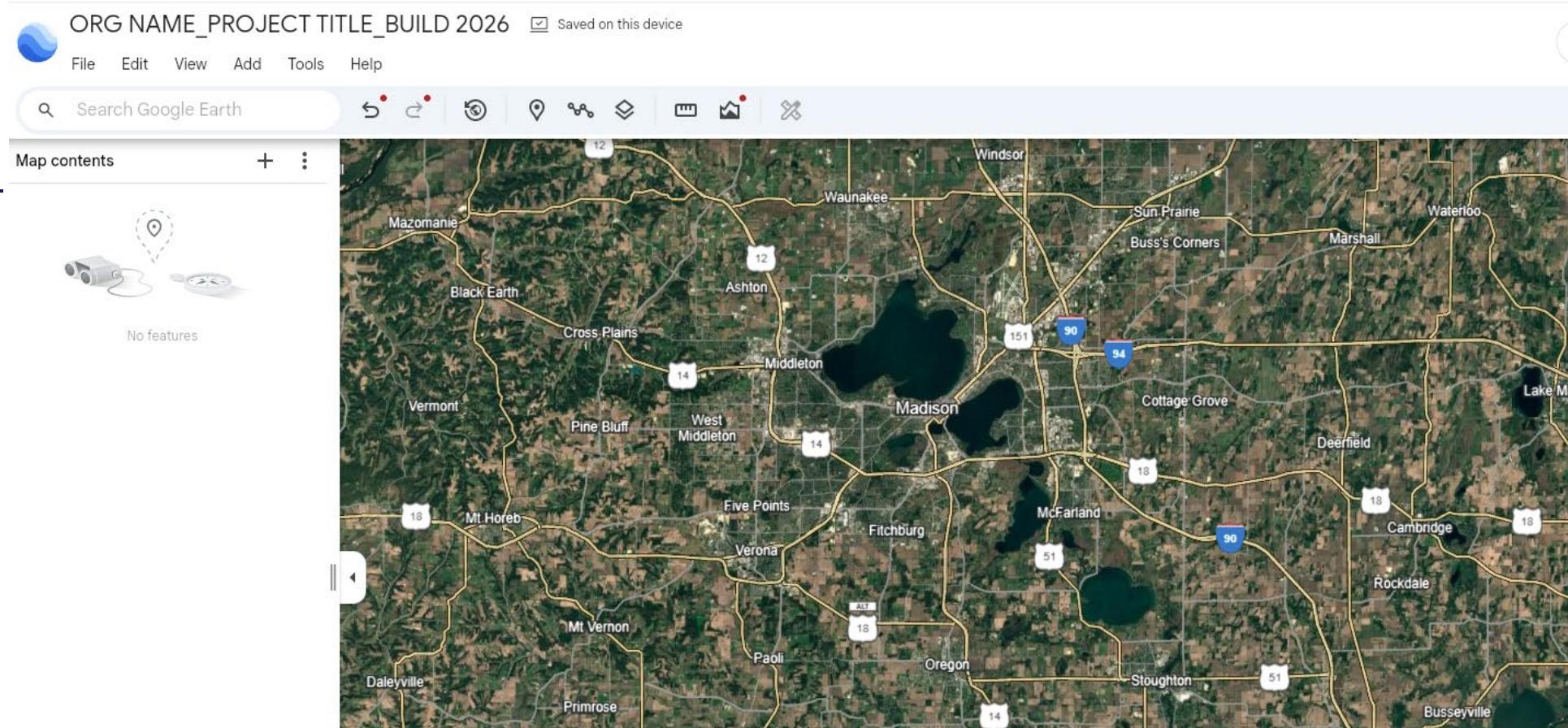
**Step 4) Select  
Everything if it was  
not selected by  
default.**



# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**Example:** Use Google Earth (<https://earth.google.com/web/>), an open-source software

**Step 5)** Name your project using this format: Your OrganizationName\_Your ProjectTitle\_BUILD 2026



**Step 6)** Navigate to the project area by:

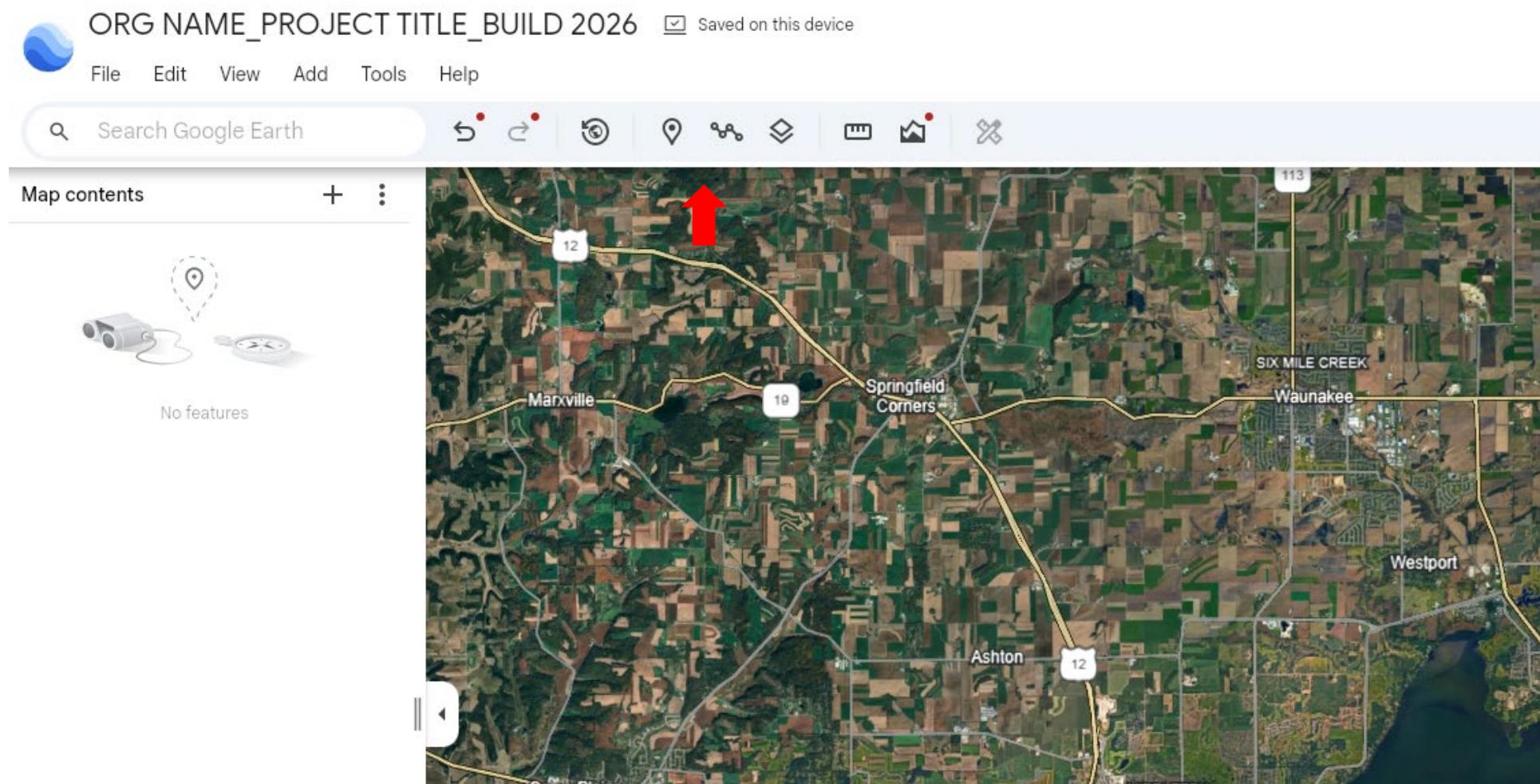
- Zooming in with your mouse, or
- Using the search bar in the top left.



# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**Example:** Use Google Earth (<https://earth.google.com/web/>), an open-source software

**Step 7)** With your project area on screen, use either the **add path or polygon** or the **add a placemark** tools to indicate the extent of your project by clicking on the map.



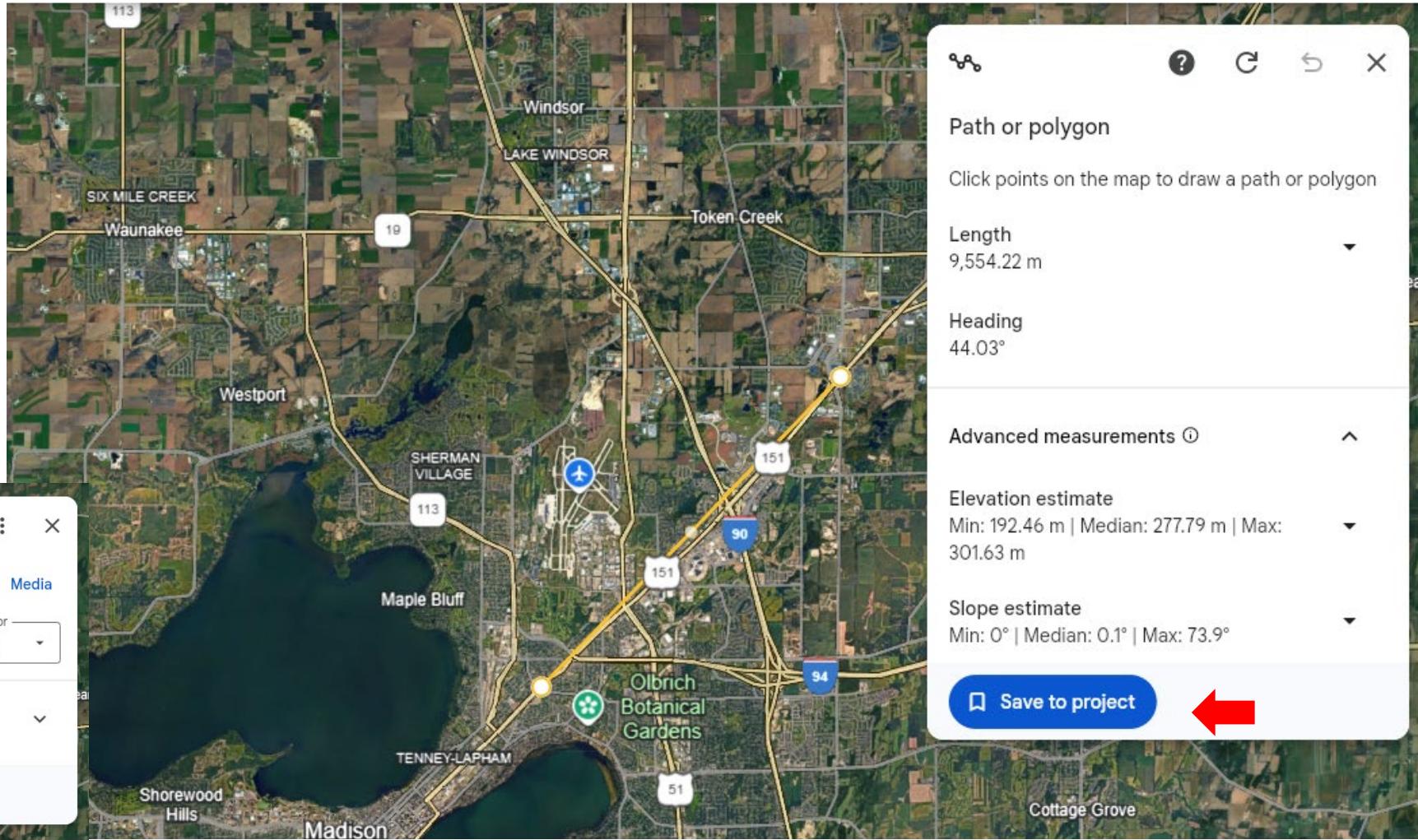
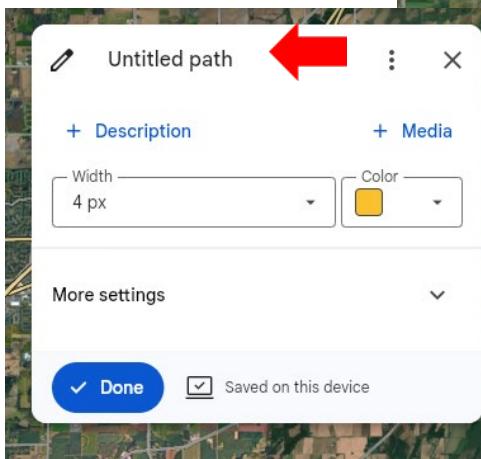


# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**Example:** Use Google Earth (<https://earth.google.com/web/>), an open-source software

**Step 8)** Click “Save to Project” in the popup to the upper right.

**Step 9)** Name your Path or Placemark.



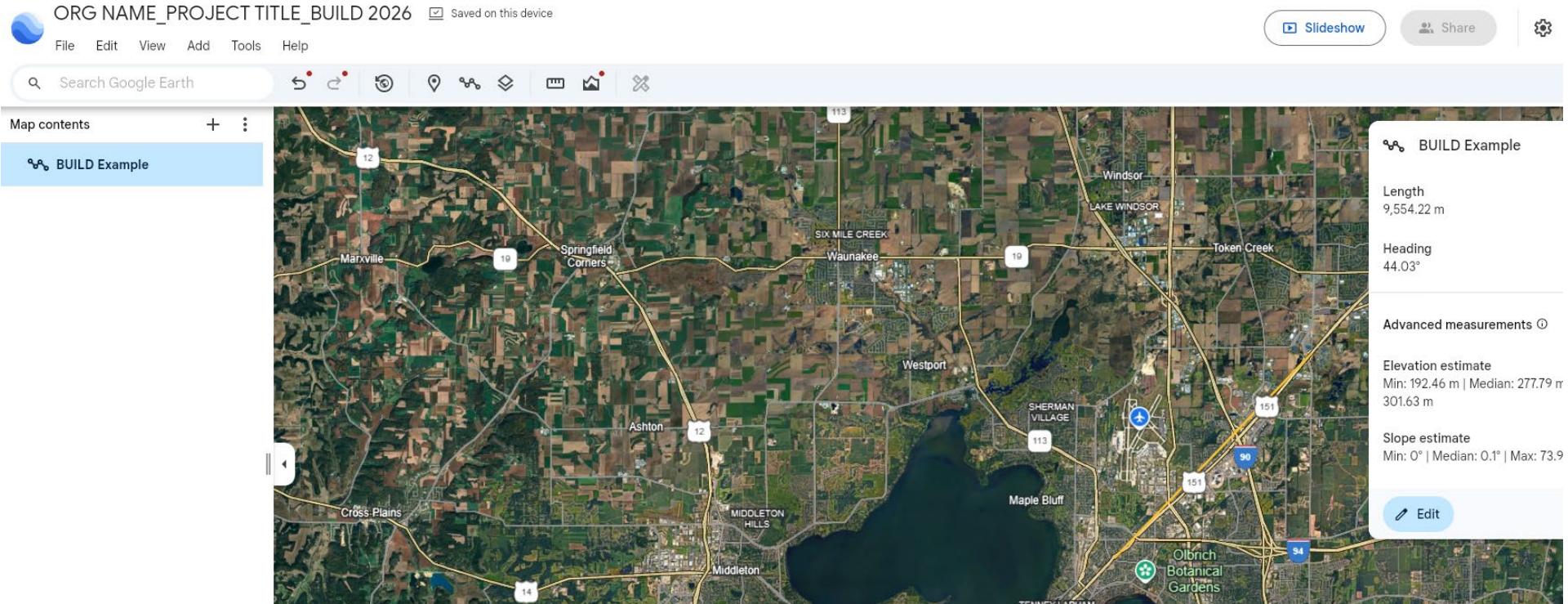


# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**Example:** Use Google Earth (<https://earth.google.com/web/>), an open-source software

**Step 10)** The new feature will be added to the layers on the left.

You may edit the feature again, if needed, using the 3 dots to the right of the feature's name.





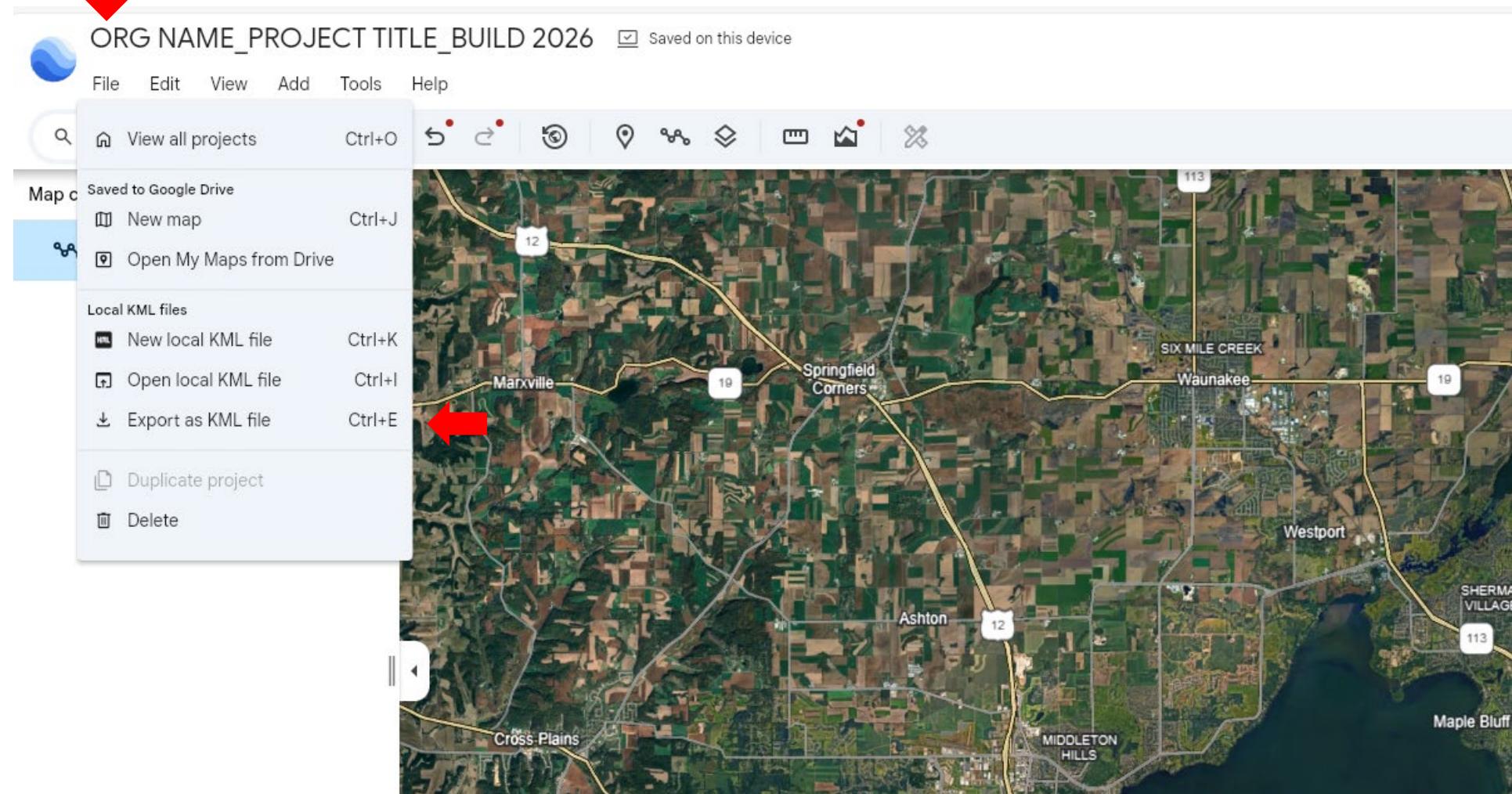
# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**Example:** Use Google Earth (<https://earth.google.com/web/>), an open-source software

**Step 11)** Ensure you have drawn all features to accurately display your project limits.

**Step 12)** Click “File” at the top of the page, then “Export as KML File”

Your entire project will now be saved to your downloads folder as a KML file.





Additional resources found on the BUILD website:

- BUILD FAQ
- Email BUILDgrants@dot.gov



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