



# US Department of Transportation



## FY 2026 BUILD - Location Designations

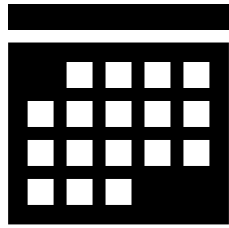


# Agenda

- 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.



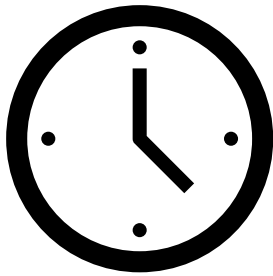
# FY 2026 BUILD NOFO



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	Up to 100% Federal funding	Capital - \$1M Planning - none	50%
Area of Persistent Poverty (APP)/Historically Disadvantaged Community (HDC)		-	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.



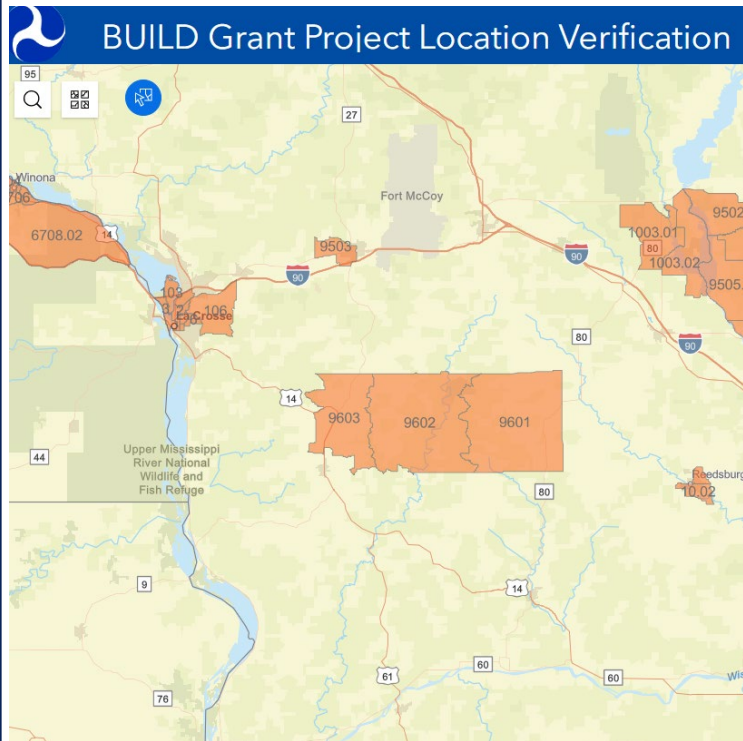
How do you determine the location designations for your project?





# 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			



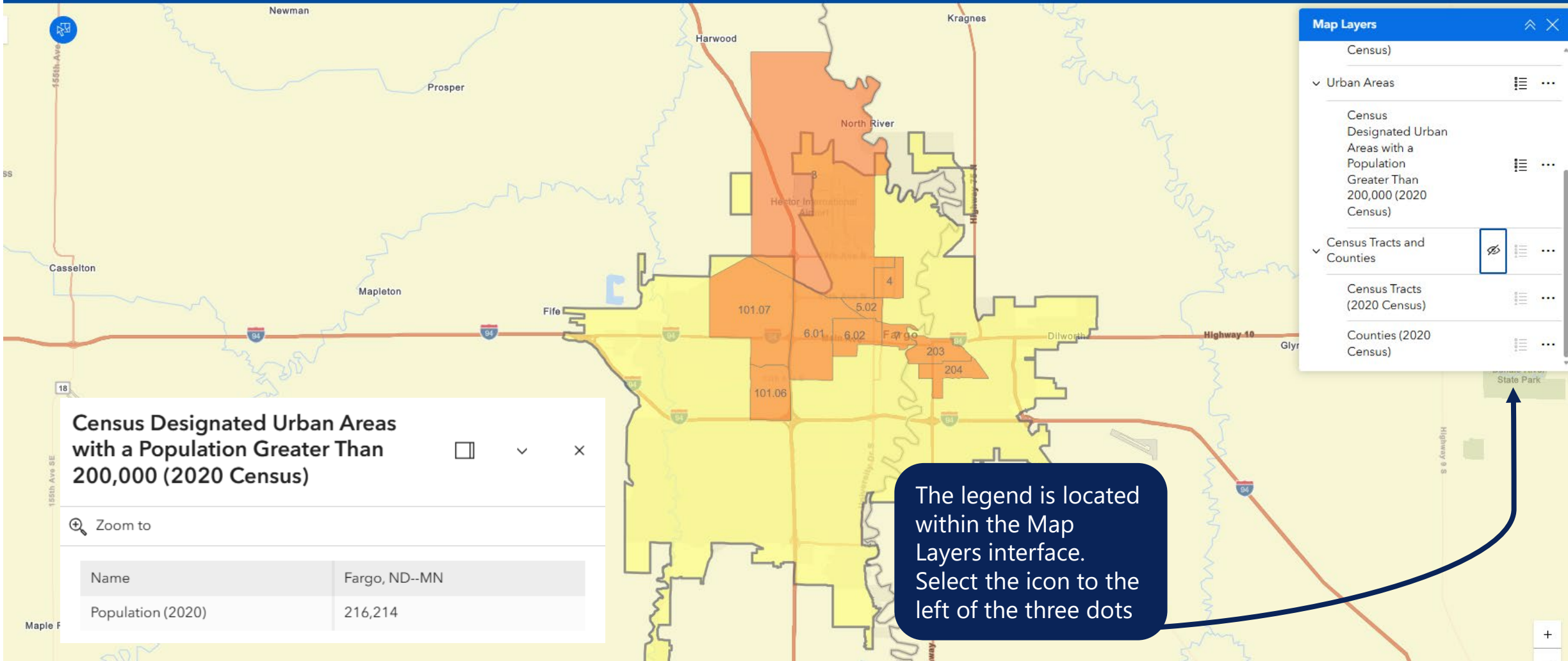
Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, EPA, USFWS

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**

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

Zoom to

Name: Census Tract 101.07

1 of 2

**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.)

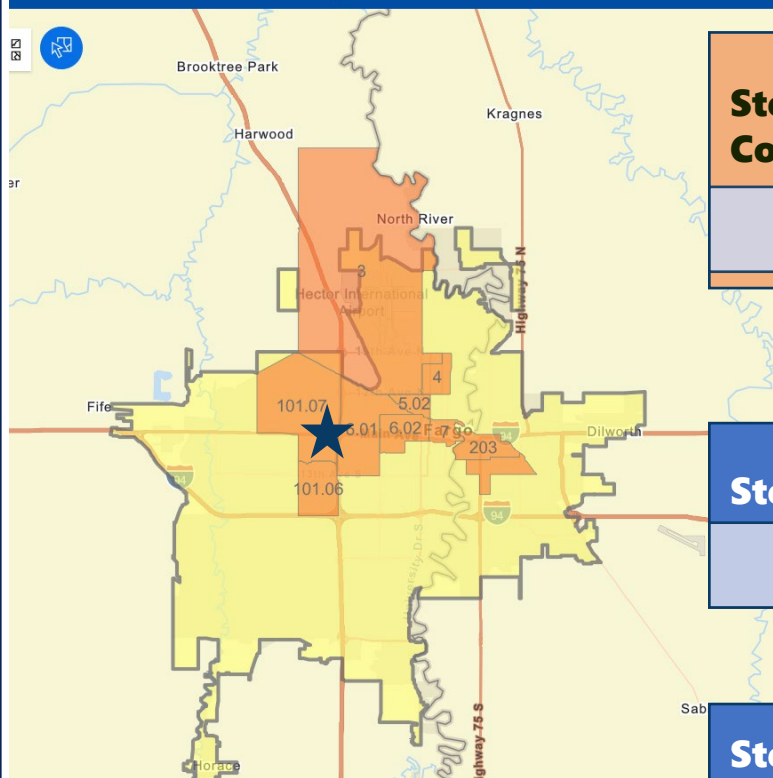


# Recommended Process for Determining Location Designations

**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)

## BUILD Grant Project Location Verification



**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]	\$
[XX.XX]	\$
[XX.XX]	\$
[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: \$	

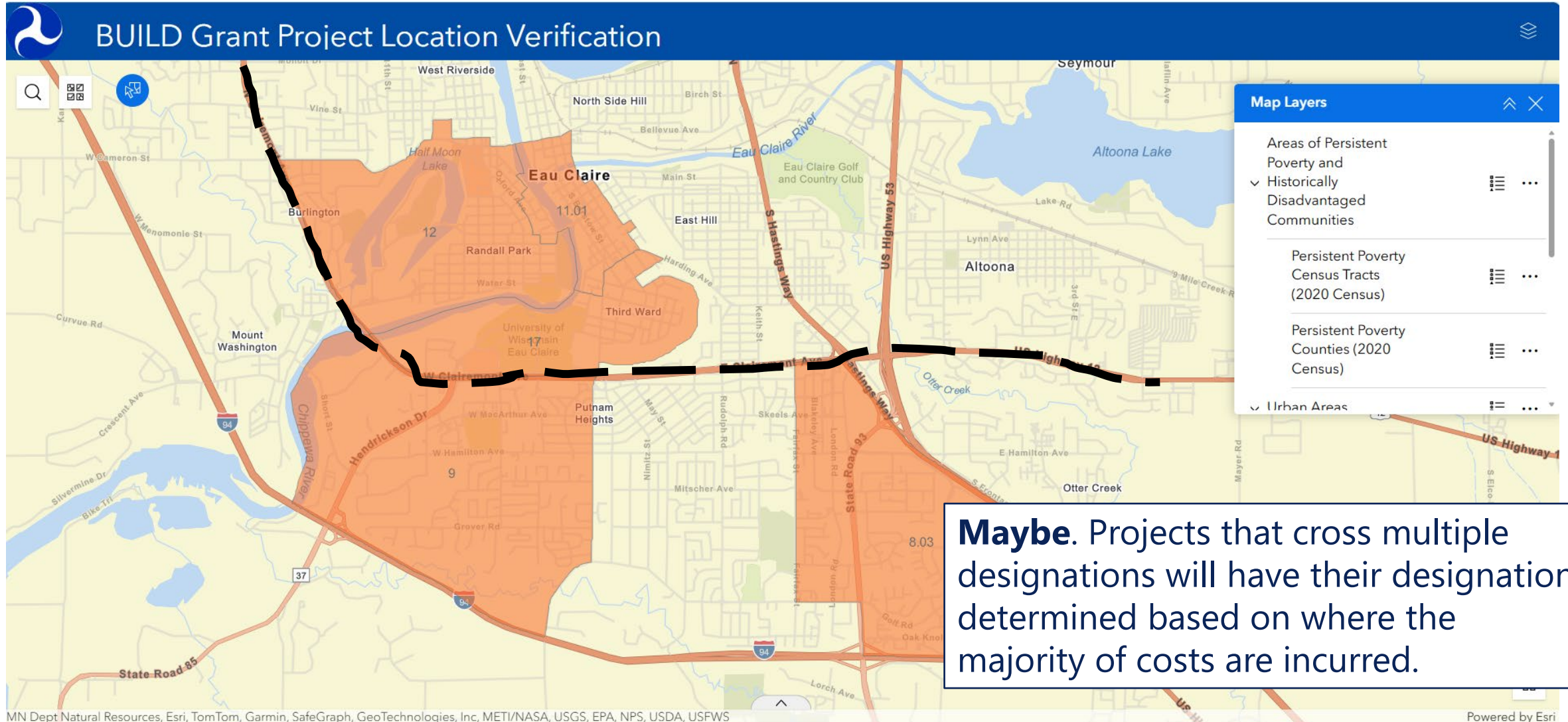
*Note: Please reference the Census Designated Urban Areas with Population Greater Than 200,000 (2020 Census) layer in the BUILD Grant Project [Location Verification mapping tool](#).*





# Location Designation Examples

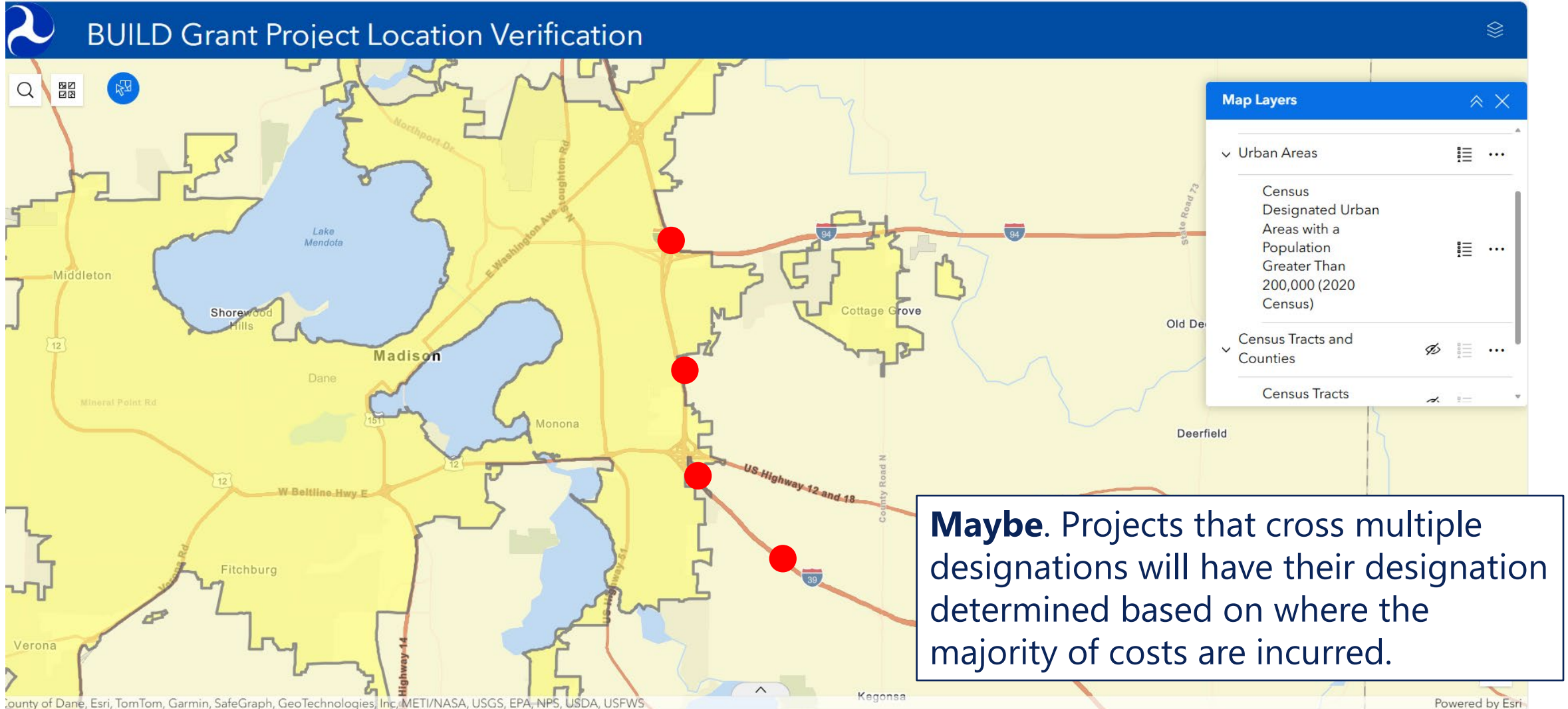
**Example #1:** Would this project (dashed line) receive an APP/HDC designation?





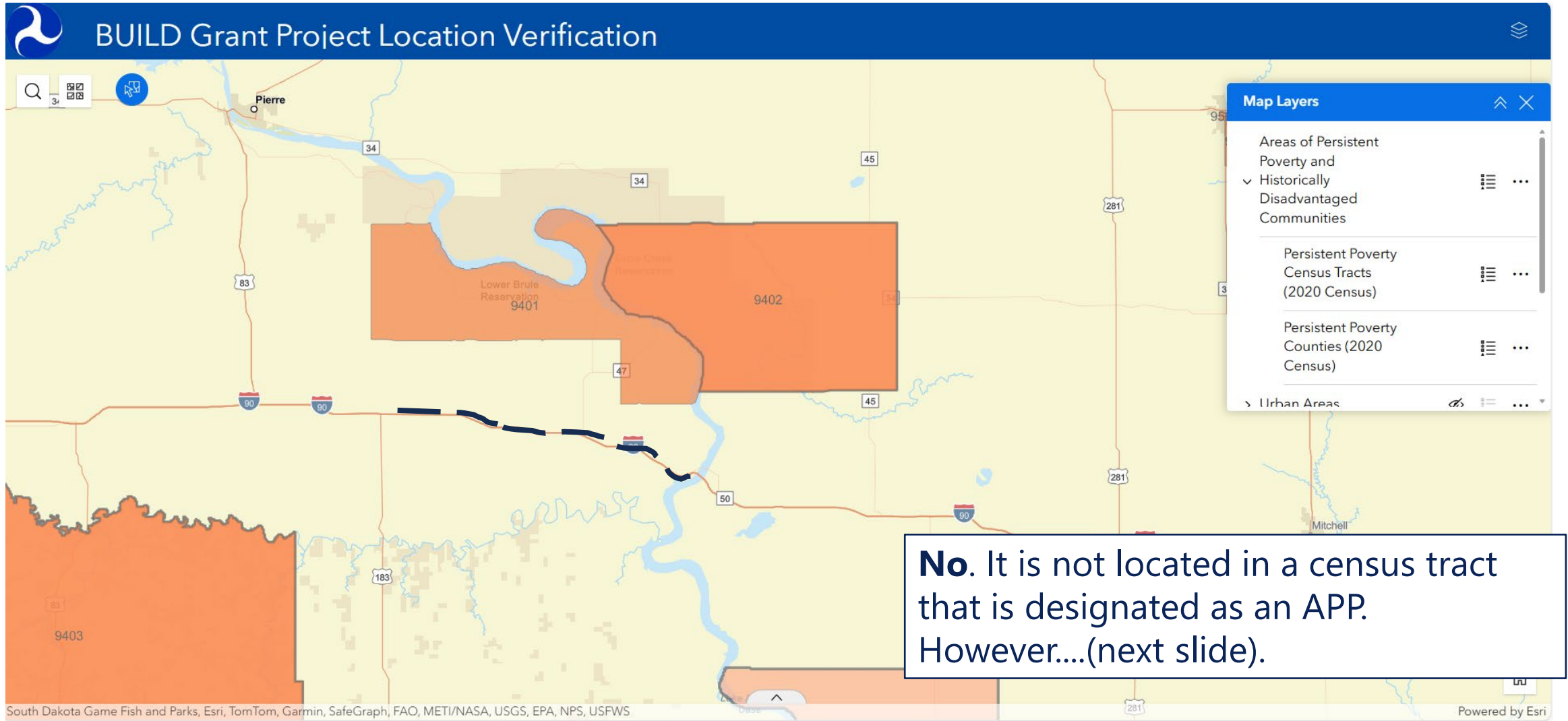
# Location Designation Examples

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



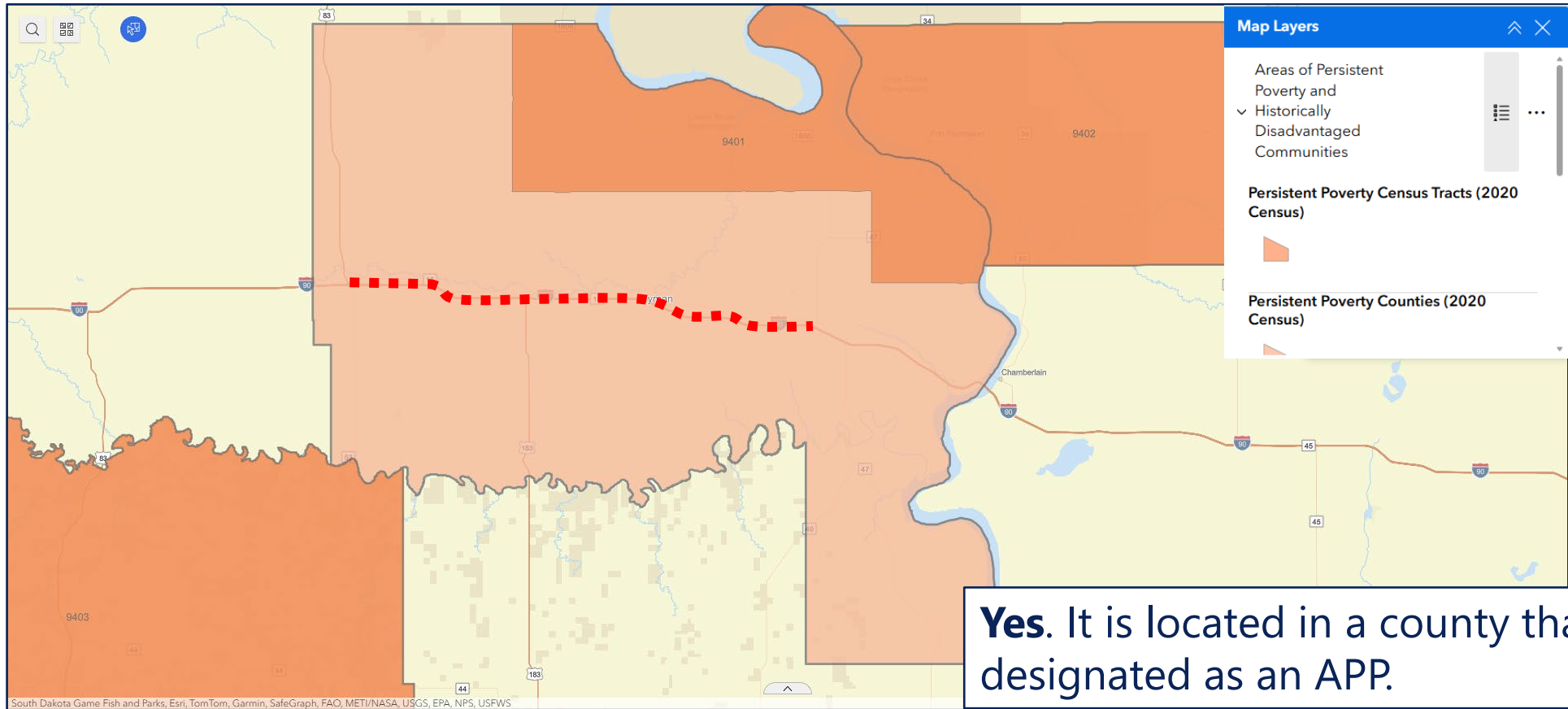
# Location Designation Examples

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



# Location Designation Examples

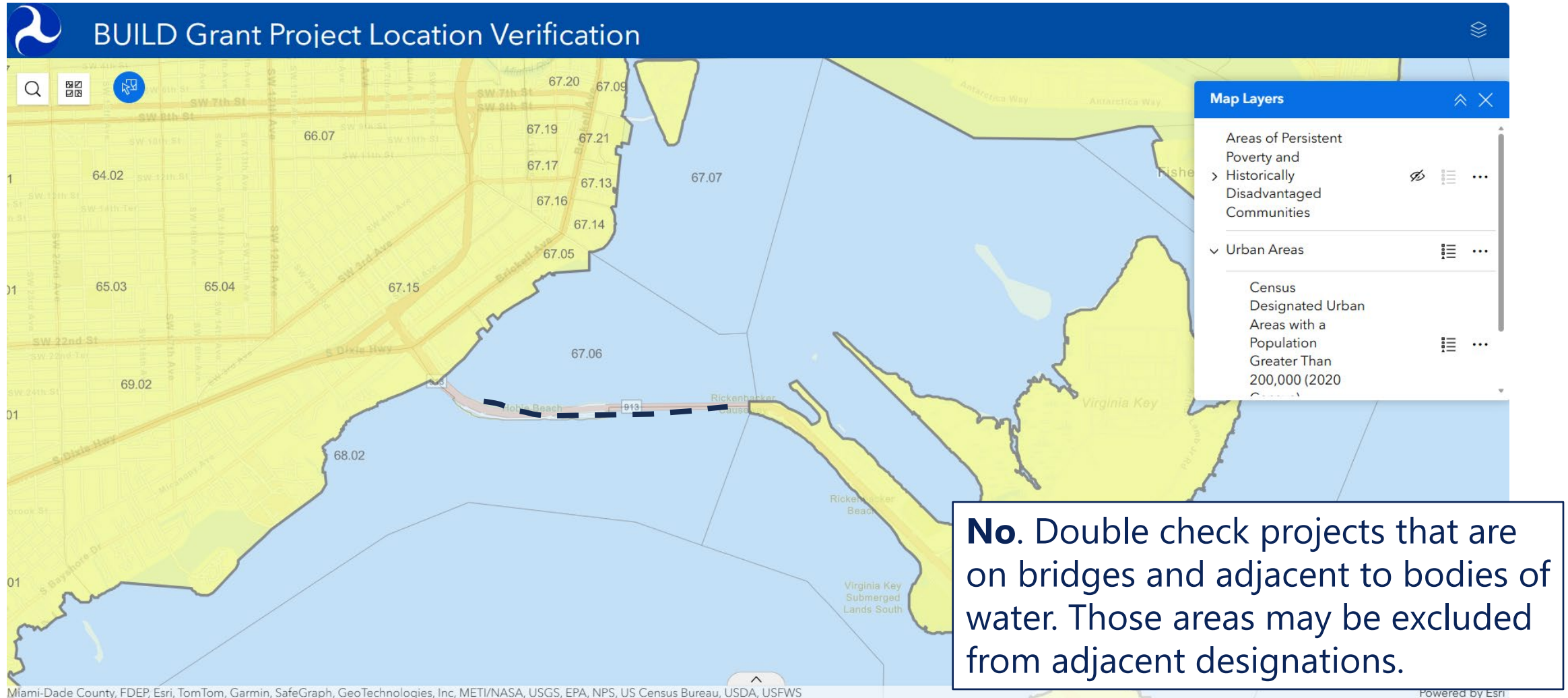
## Example #3



**Yes.** It is located in a county that is designated as an APP.

# 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.**





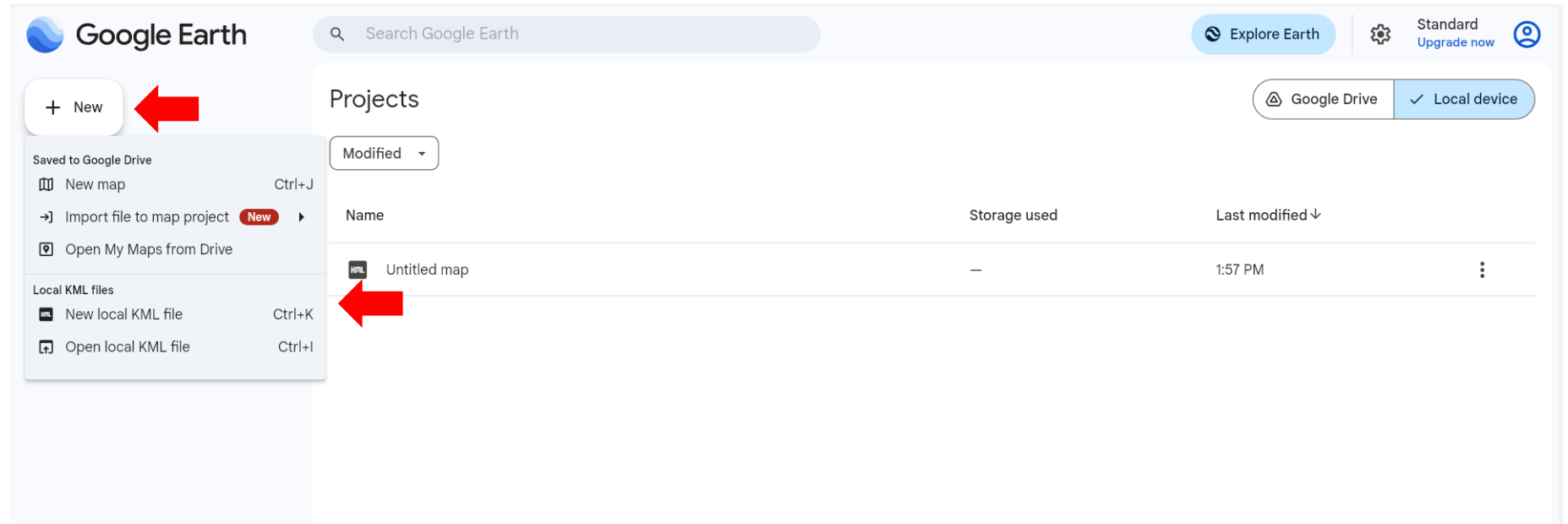
# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**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.



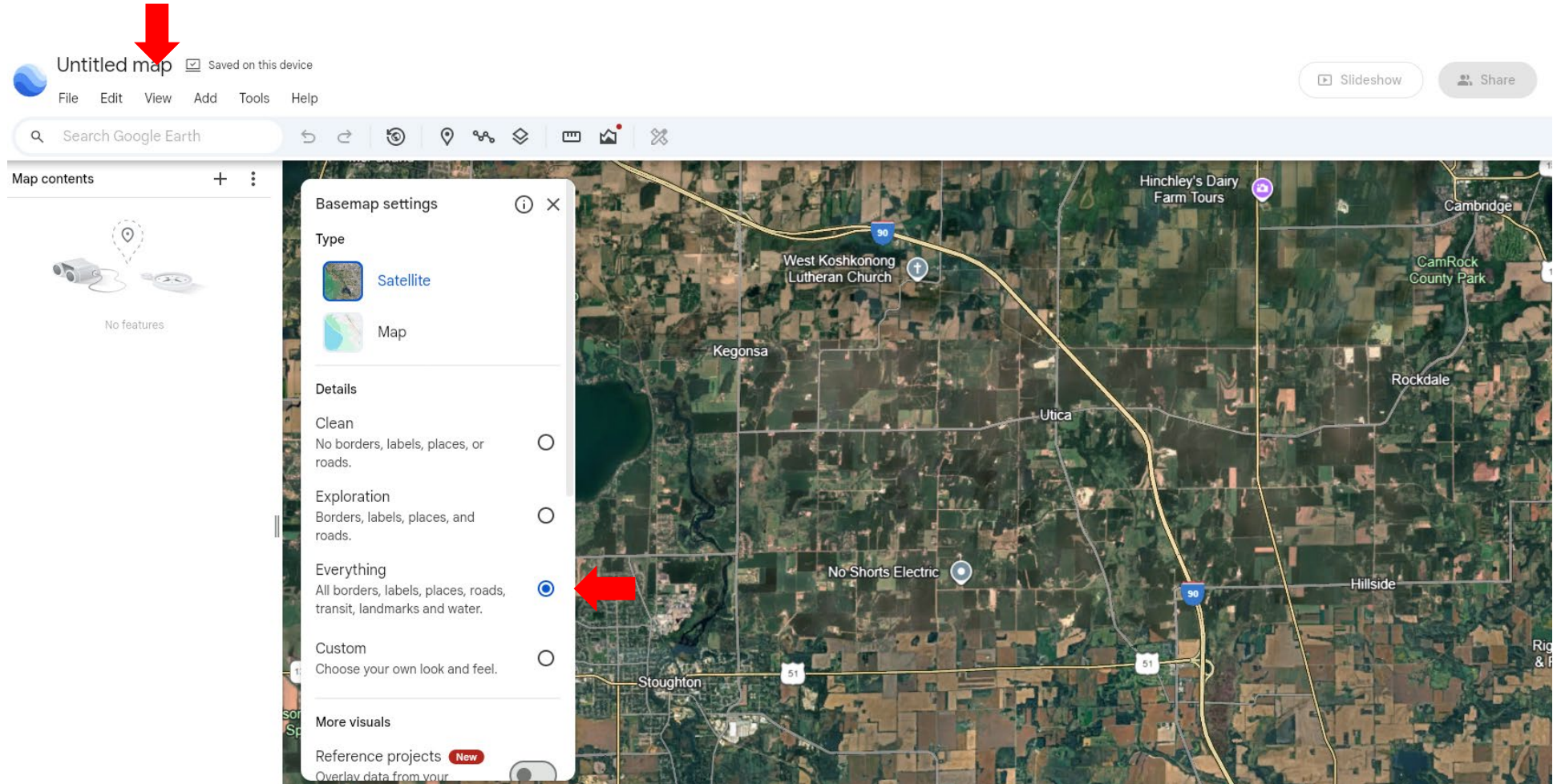


# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**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.



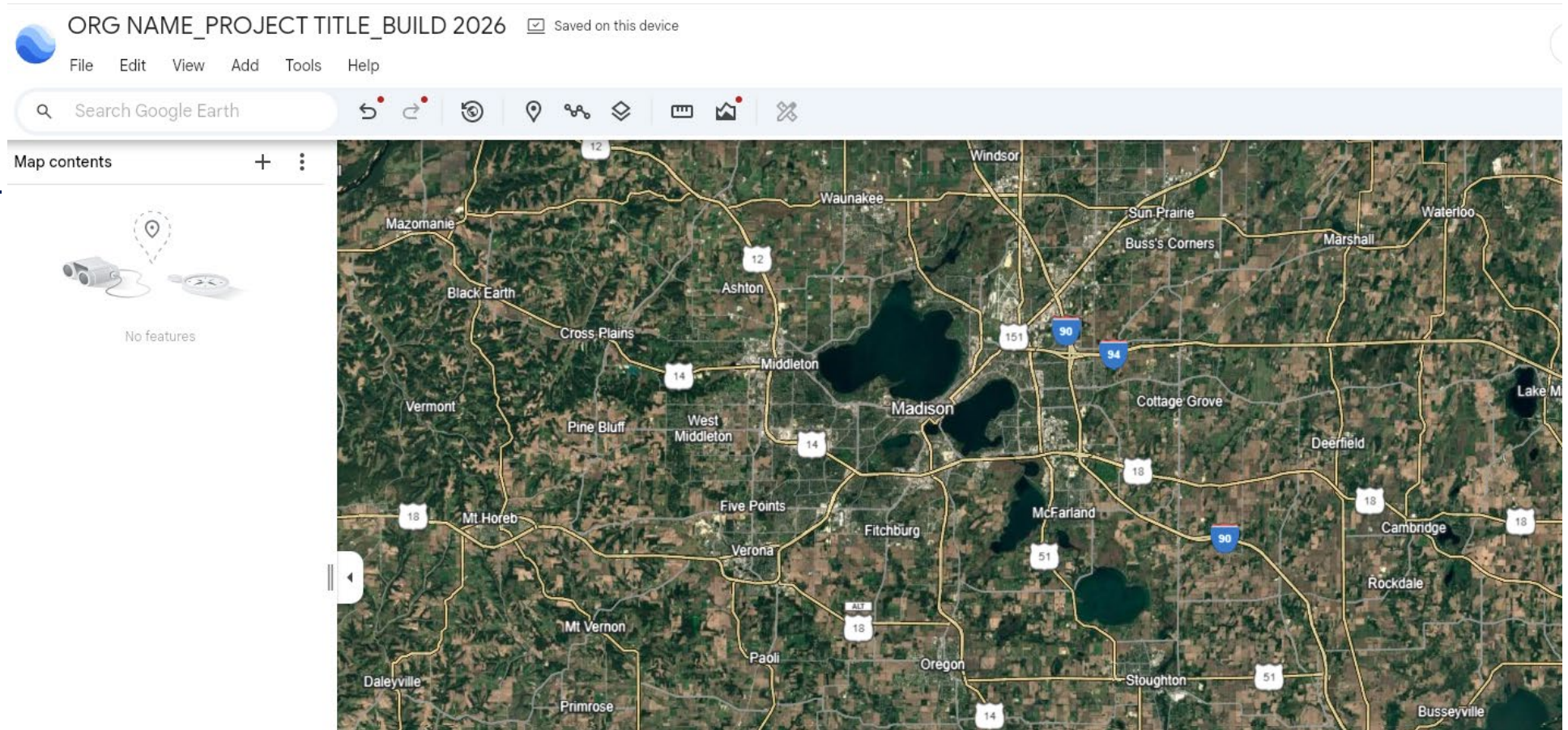




# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**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.

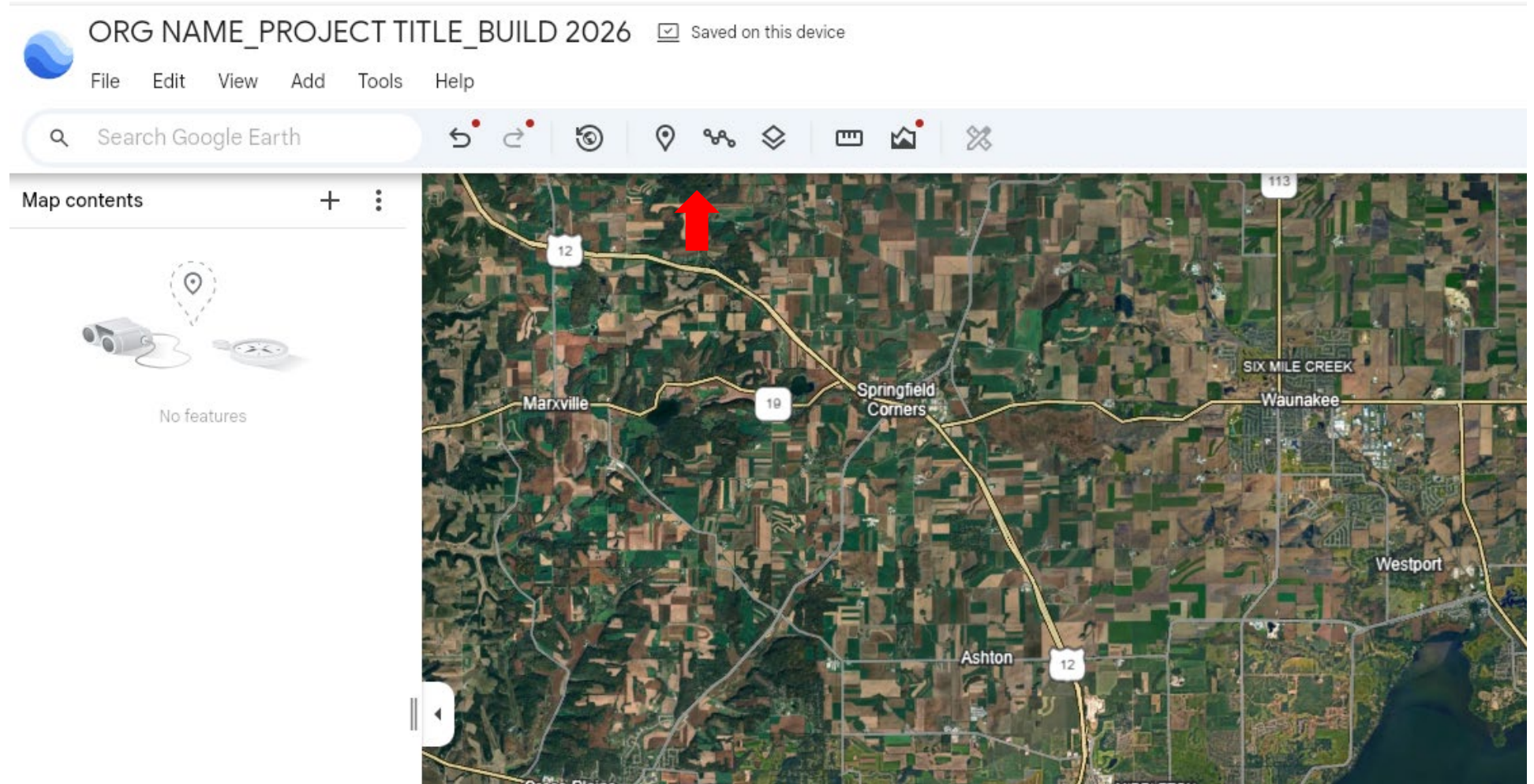




# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**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.





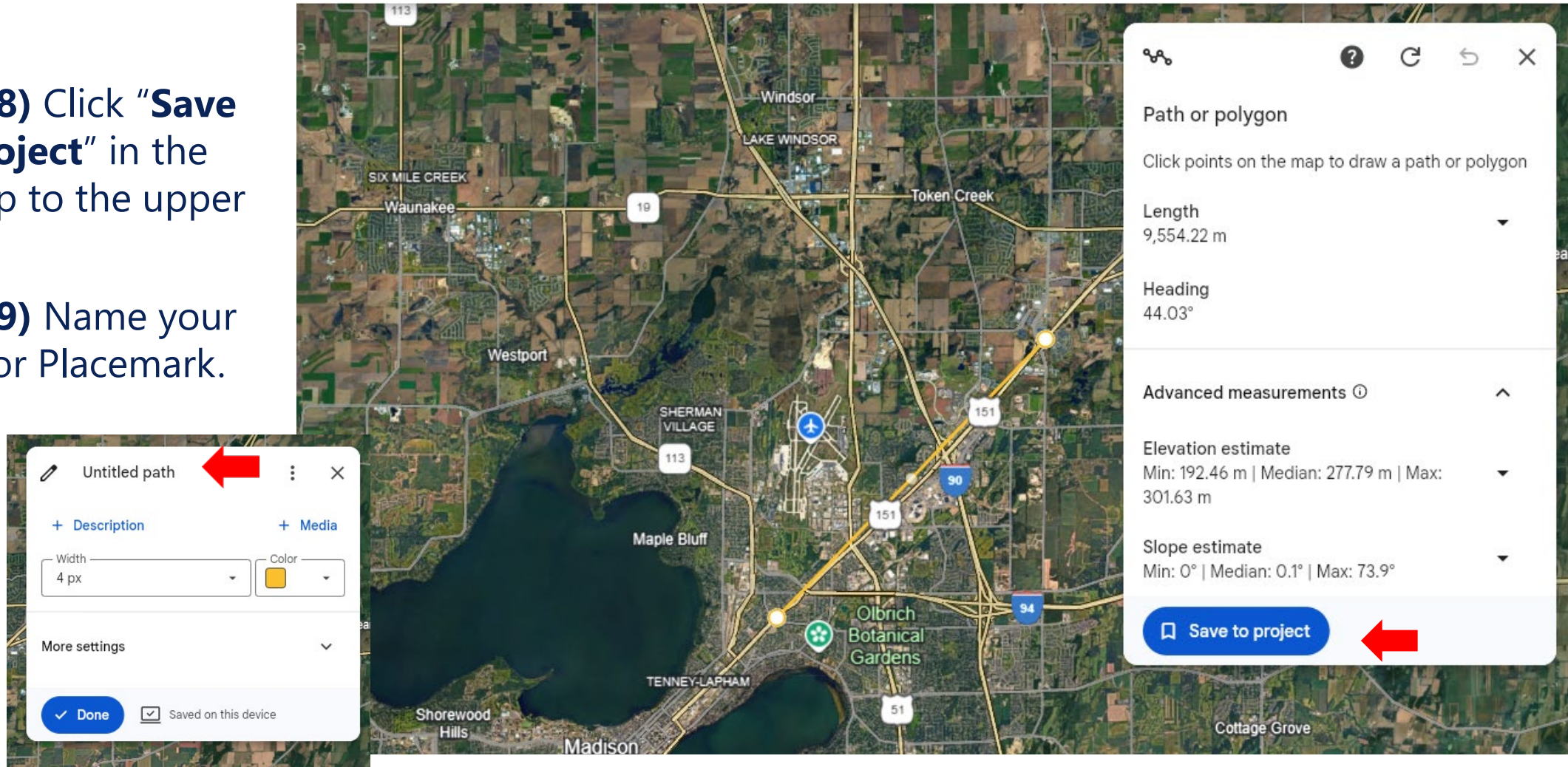


# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**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.





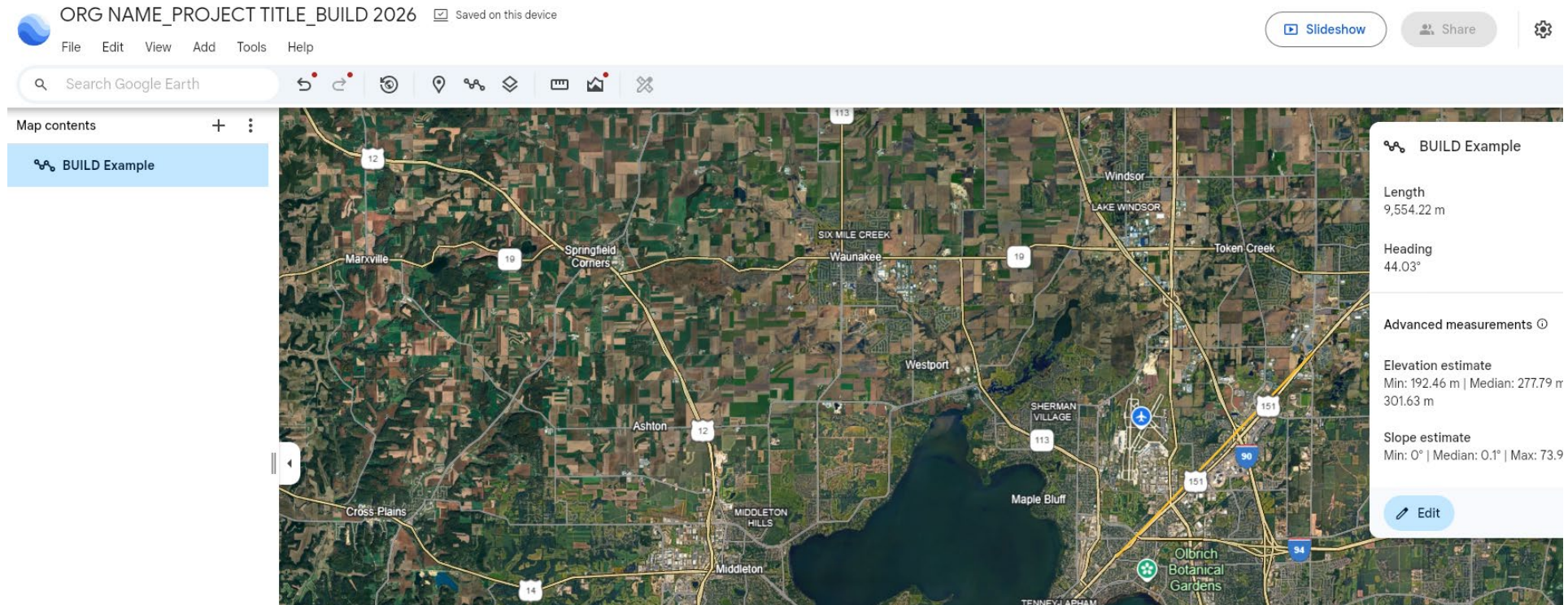


# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**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.







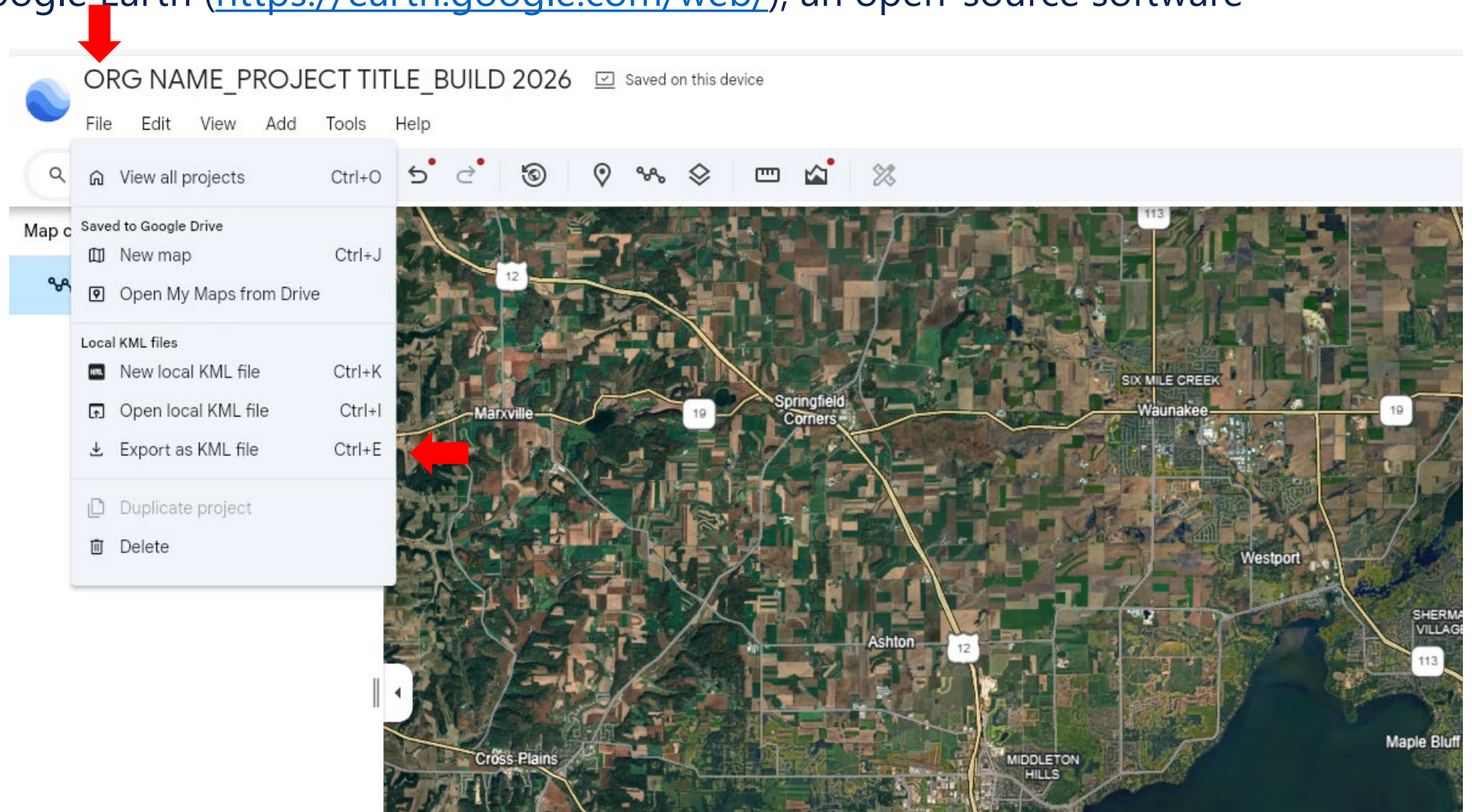
# Preparing a Spatial File to Submit with your Application

**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](mailto:BUILDgrants@dot.gov)



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