

Creating GIS Data of Your Cultural District's Boundary to Submit to MCC

Quick Summary of Overview/Context

- This year, MCC's cultural district designation application process requires you to submit GIS data.
- You may already have a cultural district map or asset data in a GIS format, ready to submit to MCC, or you may have access to relevant GIS software and staff to create that map data. If so, great! You can upload those materials to MCC in your application.
- To support organizations that might be new to GIS data, MCC has partnered with the [Metropolitan Area Planning Council \(MAPC\)](#) to provide resources that explain how to use a simple, free tool, [Google MyMaps](#), to create a cultural district boundary map and export that map as GIS data. If desired, this tool can also be used to map cultural district assets.
- You will find written tutorial materials below to walk you through how to use Google MyMaps to create geospatial data.

Overview / Context

In response to feedback from cultural districts and state agencies that the lack of GIS data on cultural district boundaries makes them invisible to decision-makers and funding programs, the Mass Cultural Council has updated its [Cultural District Designation Application Process](#) this year to include a requirement that existing and prospective Cultural Districts submit GIS data for their proposed Cultural District Boundary, and for the locations of Cultural Assets.

If you or your cultural district already has GIS data for this information (in the form of a KML, GDB, SHP, GeoJSON or other geospatial file format), great! You can upload that data as part of the application process. However, if like many cultural districts, you have an informal map image of your cultural district but not any formal GIS data (or maybe you have no image/map at all) don't worry! This tutorial will walk you through how to use a simple, free online tool, [Google MyMaps](#), in order to create your proposed Cultural District Boundary and download it as geospatial data. If desired, this tool can also be used to map cultural district assets.

Following application review, MCC will compile data from all accepted applications, meaning that designation of your district this year will result in the inclusion of your cultural district's boundary and asset data in a statewide dataset to be published by MassGIS on their [geospatial data hub](#), allowing cultural districts to become more visible and included in analysis and decisionmaking at the state and local level.

MAPC has provided tutorial materials for how to use Google MyMaps to map cultural district asset data, generate a cultural district boundary map + export as GIS data below.

Tutorial: Google MyMaps for MCC District GIS Data

The purpose of this tutorial is to guide MCC Cultural District Designation applicants in using [Google MyMaps](#) to create a map of cultural assets and to draw a shape (or shapes) representing a proposed or existing cultural district's boundary.

At the end of this tutorial you will have drawn a shape representing your district boundary on Google MyMaps. This shape can then be downloaded and submitted to MCC as part of your [MCC Cultural District Designation Application](#). You may also have cultural assets inventoried that you can include in your Google MyMap as well.

Before you get started

- **[Create a Google Account](#)** - This tutorial uses Google MyMaps, so you will need a Google account.
 - If you already have a gmail account you already have a google account!
 - That said, you don't need a gmail address to create a google account. You can also use a non-gmail email address to create one instead.
- **Verify you have access to Google MyMaps** - Once you have created and logged into your google account, you should be able to access [Google MyMaps](#).
- **Review cultural district municipal authorization** - if your community has a resolution, ordinance, or bylaw formally describing, designating and/or authorizing your arts district, review that document to ensure the boundary you draw matches the official description of the district. (See "District Requirements" and "Municipal Authorization" [here](#))
- **Find any existing maps or images of your cultural district** - Check your cultural district organization's website and internal files for an existing map or image of your cultural district's boundaries. Check that this image agrees with the official description of the district. This will come in handy as a reference image when you are drawing your district boundary.
- **Inventory your cultural assets** - If you have an inventory of your cultural assets, including the address of each cultural asset, a map of these addresses may be helpful for drawing a cultural district boundary shape. This tutorial will show you how to use the spreadsheet template provided in the application materials for this task.

How To Steps (Table of Contents)

[Step 1. Inventory Cultural Assets in a template spreadsheet \(p 3\)](#)

[Step 2. Upload your assets to the Google MyMap \(p 3-6\)](#)

[Step 3. Draw a Shape to represent your Cultural District \(p 7-8\)](#)

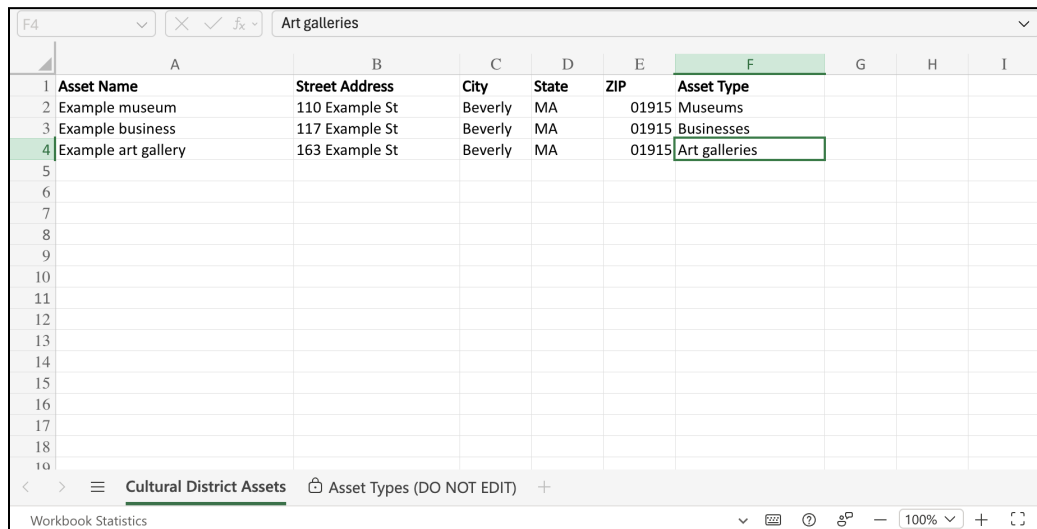
[Step 4. Export the Boundary Shape as a KML \(p 9\)](#)

[Step 5. Upload the KML file to the MCC Cultural District Application \(p 9-10\)](#)

[Step 6. Share your MyMap URL \[optional\] \(p 10\)](#)

Step 1. Inventory Cultural Assets in a template spreadsheet

- Fill out the MCC-provided template spreadsheet (“Cultural_District_Asset_Inventory_Template.xlsx”) being sure to include the following information for every asset
 - Asset Name
 - Street Address
 - City
 - State
 - Zip
 - Asset Type

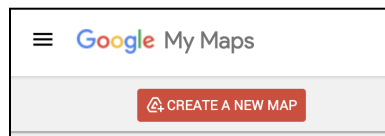


The screenshot shows a spreadsheet titled "Art galleries" with the following data:

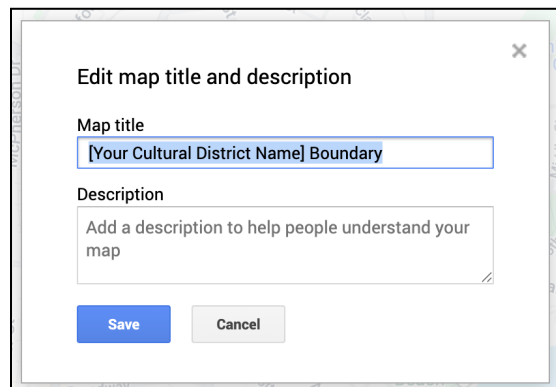
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Asset Name	Street Address	City	State	ZIP	Asset Type			
2	Example museum	110 Example St	Beverly	MA	01915	Museums			
3	Example business	117 Example St	Beverly	MA	01915	Businesses			
4	Example art gallery	163 Example St	Beverly	MA	01915	Art galleries			
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Step 2. Upload your assets to the Google MyMap

- Open Google My Maps: mymaps.google.com
- Select “CREATE A NEW MAP”

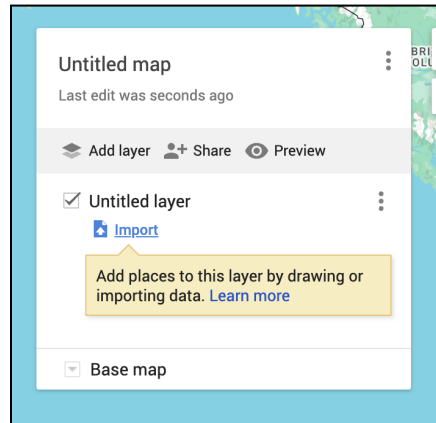


- Title your map “[Your Cultural District Name]” Boundary

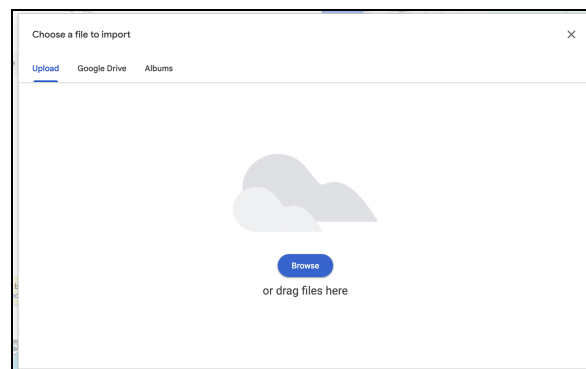


The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Edit map title and description". It has two input fields: "Map title" and "Description". The "Map title" field contains the text "[Your Cultural District Name] Boundary". The "Description" field is empty and has a placeholder text "Add a description to help people understand your map". At the bottom of the dialog are two buttons: "Save" and "Cancel".

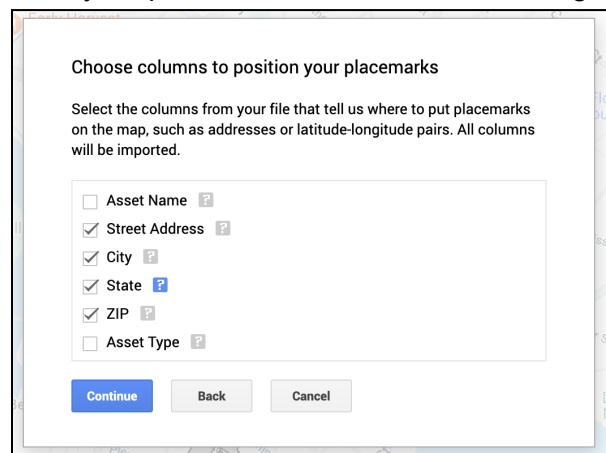
- Under “Untitled Layer” in the layer menu bar select “Import”



- Select your cultural assets data file (the template “Cultural_District_Asset_Inventory_Template.xlsx” file from MCC that you completed—or whatever you renamed it to) by dragging it into the upload box or by selecting “Browse” and selecting it from your computer’s file directory.



- When prompted to “Choose columns to position your placemarks, select the following columns:
 - Street Address
 - City
 - State
 - ZIP



TIP: if you are using an inventory spreadsheet that is not formatted to match the MMC-provided template, your column options may be different. Choose the column or columns that provide a complete address and/or a latitude and longitude.

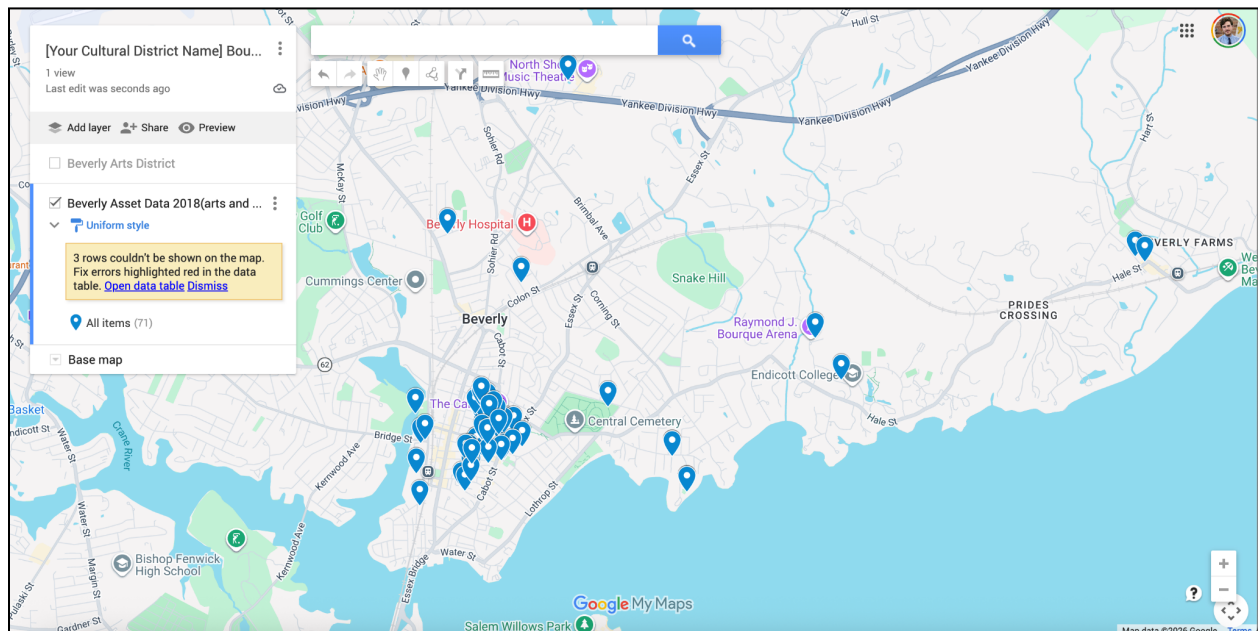
- When prompted to “Choose a column to title your markers”, select “Asset Name” and then click “Finish”

Choose a column to title your markers

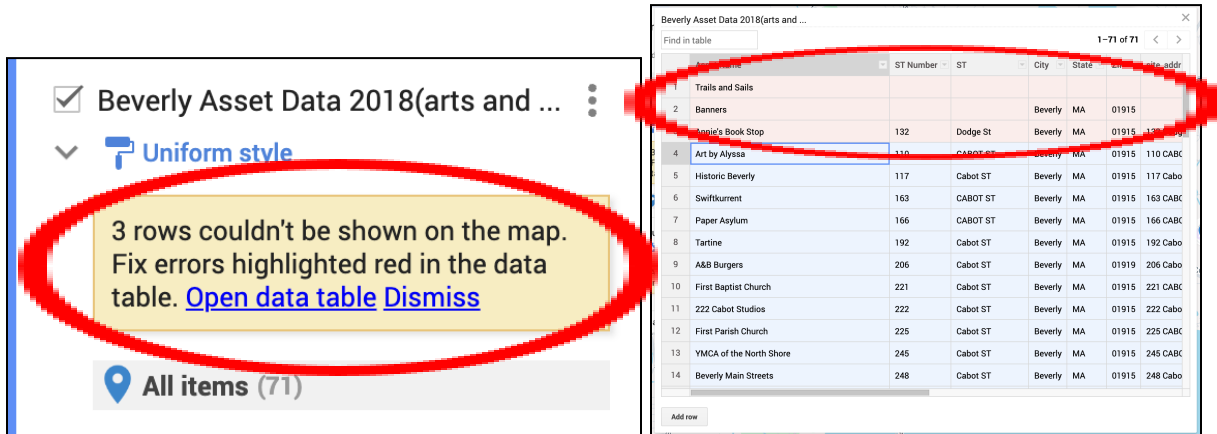
Pick a column to use as the title for the placemarks, such as the name of the location or person.

☒ Asset Name ?
 ☐ Street Address ?
 ☐ City ?
 ☐ State ?
 ☐ ZIP ?
 ☐ Asset Type ?

- You should now have a layer named to match your asset inventory file with markers appearing on the map at address locations that correspond to your cultural assets.

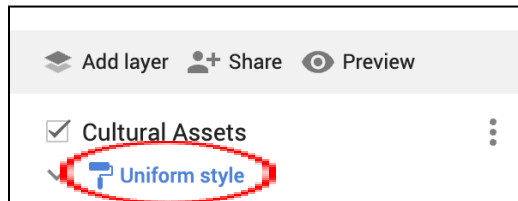


- Double check the map and the layer menu for inventory items that may have failed to import or may have mapped to the wrong location.
 - If anything failed to import, there should be a yellow alert box under the layer in the layer menu bar. If so, open the data table to identify them (assets that failed to import/map will be highlighted) and correct any issues with your asset inventory spreadsheet before re-importing.
 - Even if you do not see a “fix errors” alert box, assets still may have been mapped to the wrong address. Zoom (way) out on the map to check for any markers that may have shown up elsewhere.

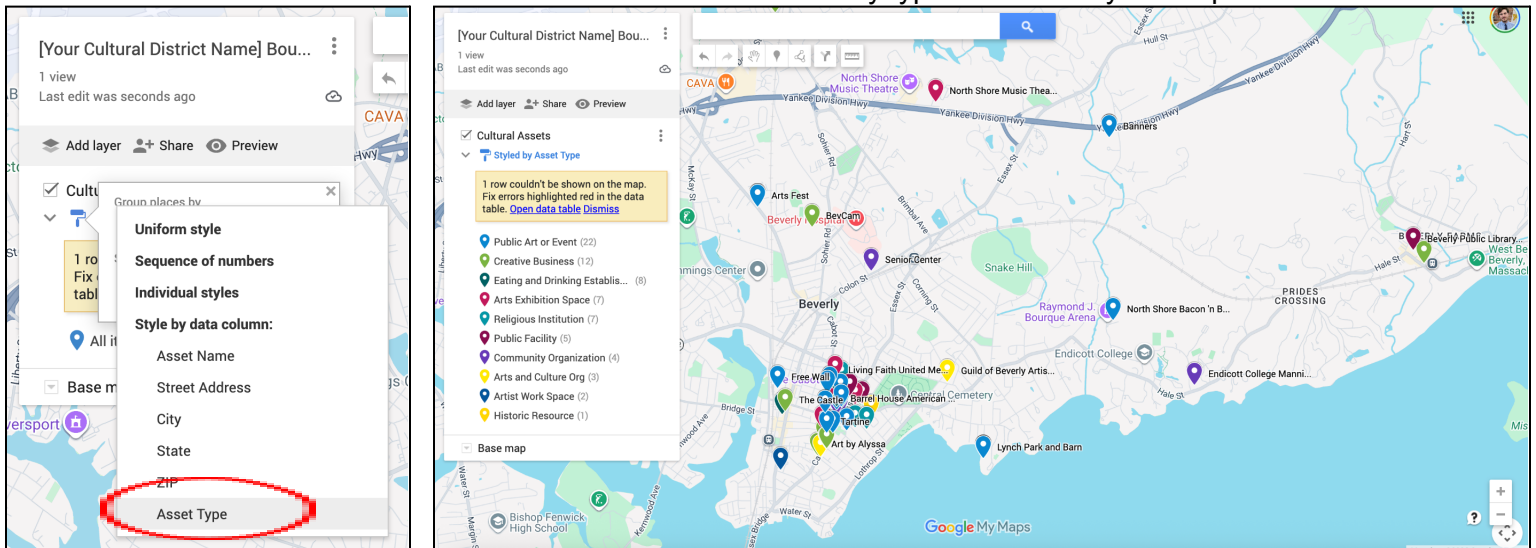


ST Number	ST	City	State	ZIP
132	Dodge St	Beverly	MA	01915
110	CABOT ST	Beverly	MA	01915
117	Cabot ST	Beverly	MA	01915
163	CABOT ST	Beverly	MA	01915
166	CABOT ST	Beverly	MA	01915
192	Cabot ST	Beverly	MA	01915
206	Cabot ST	Beverly	MA	01915
221	Cabot ST	Beverly	MA	01915
222	Cabot ST	Beverly	MA	01915
225	Cabot ST	Beverly	MA	01915
245	Cabot ST	Beverly	MA	01915
248	Cabot ST	Beverly	MA	01915

- [Optional] color code assets by type.
 - In the layer menu click “Uniform Style” next to the paint roller icon underneath the layer name.



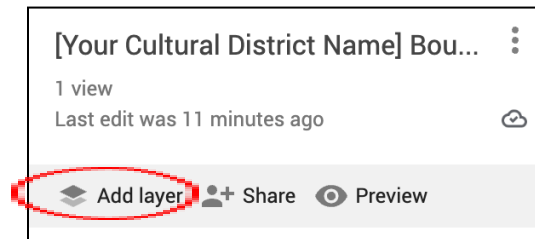
- Where it says “Group Places By” select “Asset Type”
- Your asset markers will now be colored by type of asset on your map.



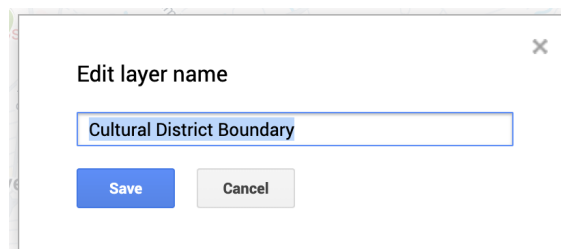
Step 3. Draw a Shape to represent your Cultural District

Now that you have imported your cultural assets, you are ready to [draw the shape](#) of your district boundary in MyMaps.

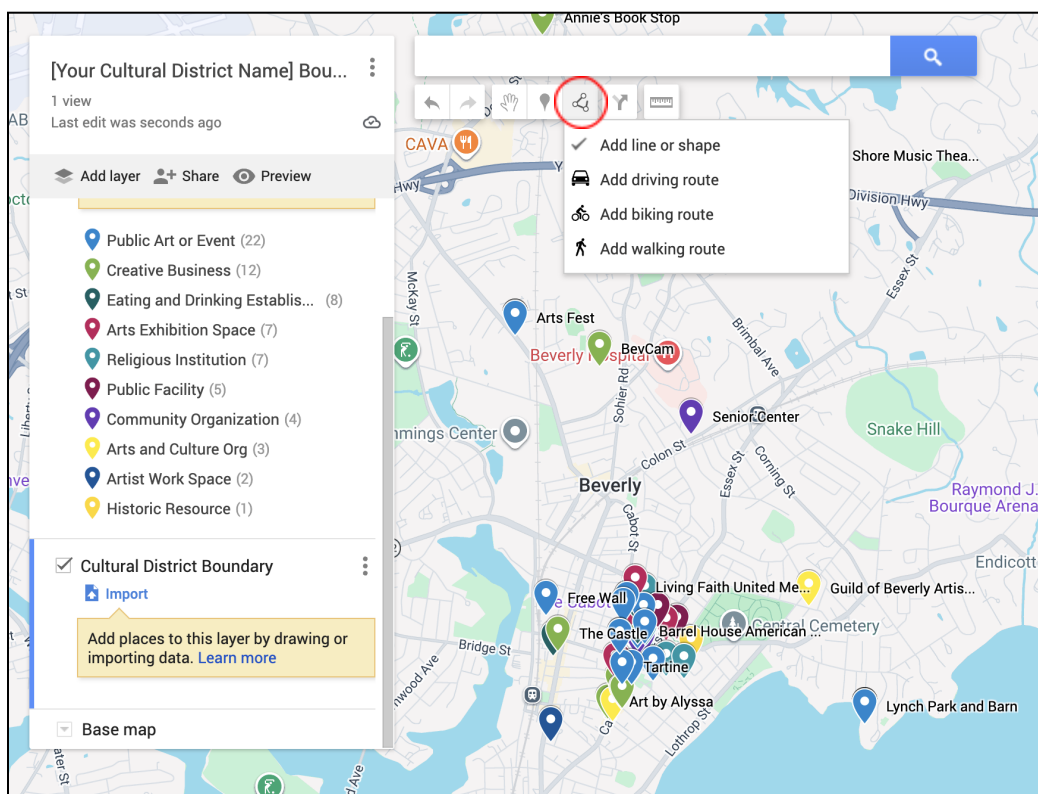
- [Optional] If you have an existing map image or other district image, or any other descriptive language, pull that up for reference.
- Now, using your cultural asset locations and any other references as a guide, you will draw a shape that represents the area/boundary of your cultural district.
 - First click the “Add layer” option at the top of your layer menu bar.



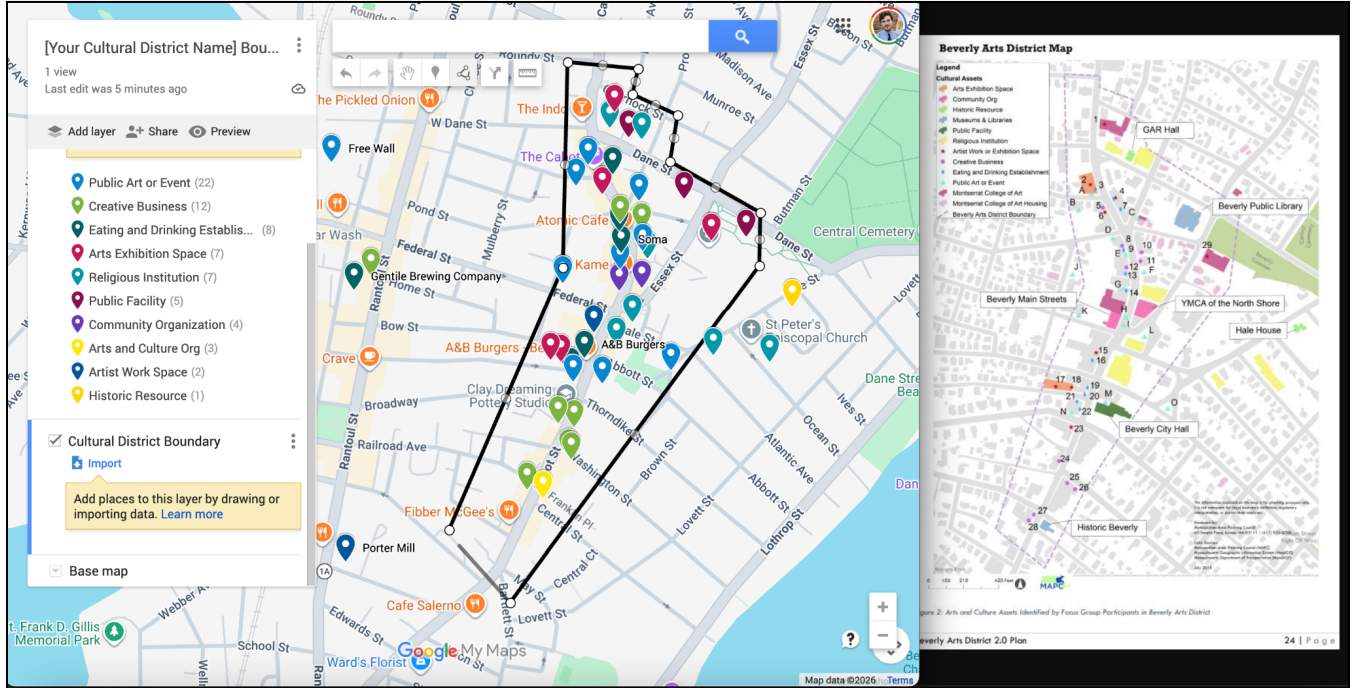
- Next label your layer “Cultural District Boundary” by clicking on the words “Untitled Layer” on your new layer.



- Click on the “Add line or shape” icon under the search bar and select [“Add line or shape”](#)

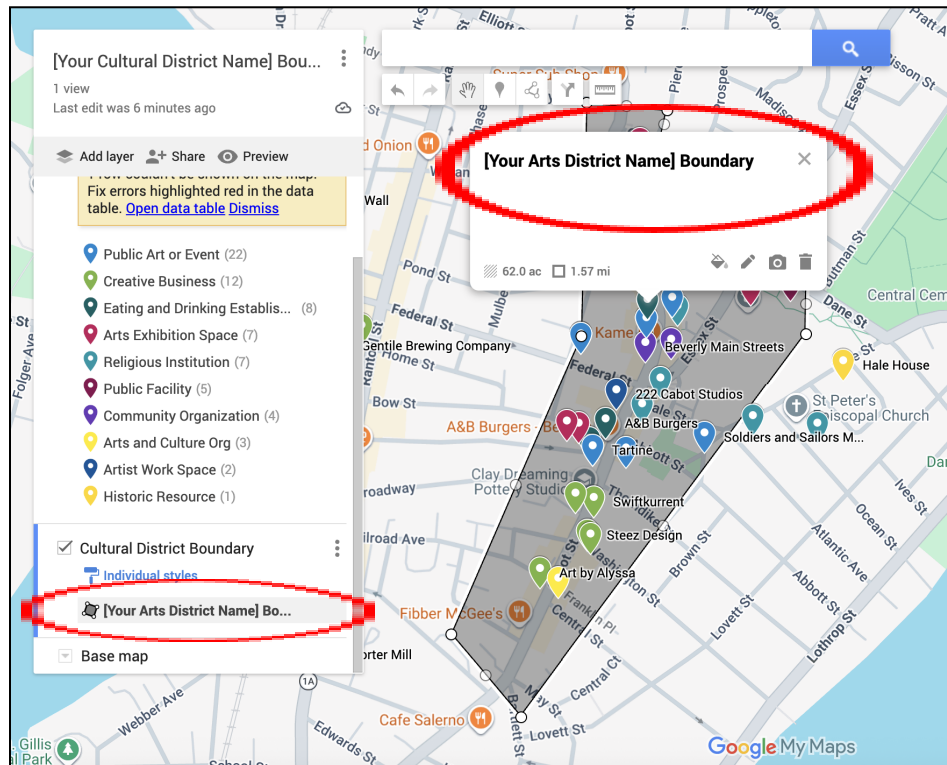


- Click on the map to start [drawing your shape](#) by adding a first vertex. Then click again to create a line, and again to add more lines + vertices. Continue this process until you have finished drawing the shape of your cultural district, completing the process by clicking back on the first vertex you added.



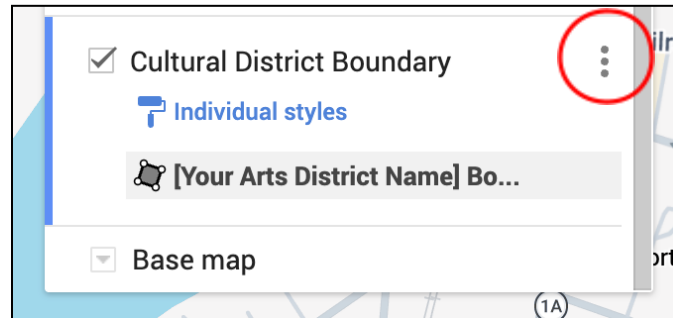
Drawing the Beverly Arts district in Google MyMaps (left) based on a reference image (right).

- Label your shape “[Your District Name] Boundary” and it will appear under your layer.

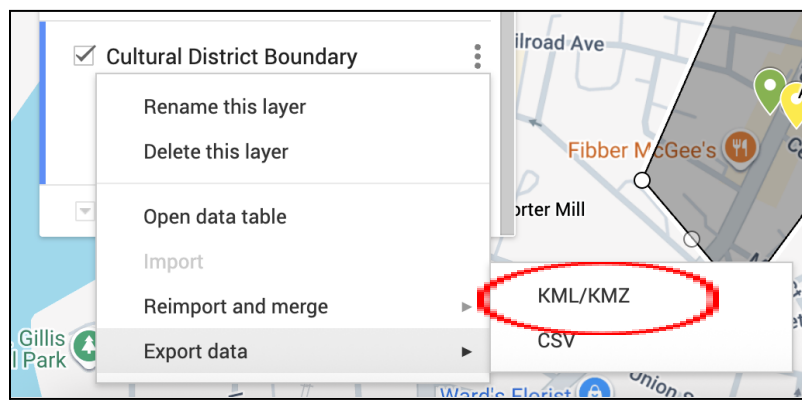


Step 4. Export the Boundary Shape as a KML

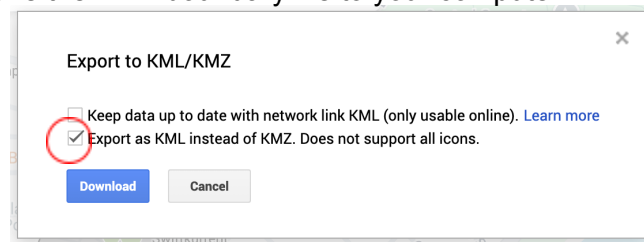
- Click on the three dots menu icon next to your “Cultural District Boundary” layer.



- Select “Export data” and “KML/KMZ”



- Next select “Export as KML instead of KMZ. Does not support all icons.” and click Download to save the KML boundary file to your computer.



Step 5. Upload the KML file to the MCC Cultural District Application

- Open the MCC application and go to the “District Map” question.

District Map

This section helps define the proposed district in a clear, mappable way and show its boundaries and cultural assets.

Please provide a map that clearly shows the proposed district boundaries. Applicants may submit a GIS map with assets, a boundary map with an accompanying asset list or spreadsheet, or a Google My Maps map with an accompanying asset list or spreadsheet.

Cultural district assets should include:

- Cultural facilities, organizations, venues, amenities, and historic structures and recreational areas in the district.
- Creative businesses, stores, studios, and participating entrepreneurs and artists who want to be included in the map.

Maps may also include, if applicable:

- Zoning and land use policy overlays created to support the district.

* What type of Map are you providing?

Google MyMa

* Map Upload

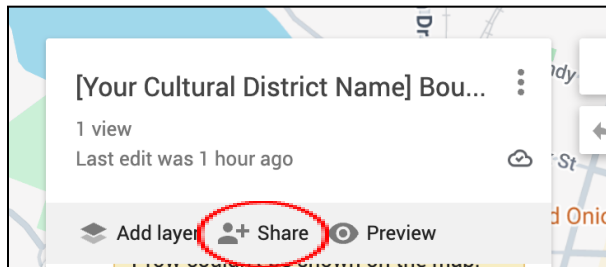
Drop files here or [browse files](#)

Maximum file size: 2 GB | Allowed file types: TXT, PDF, DOC, DOCX, XLS, XLSX, JPG, JPEG, PNG, KML, KMZ

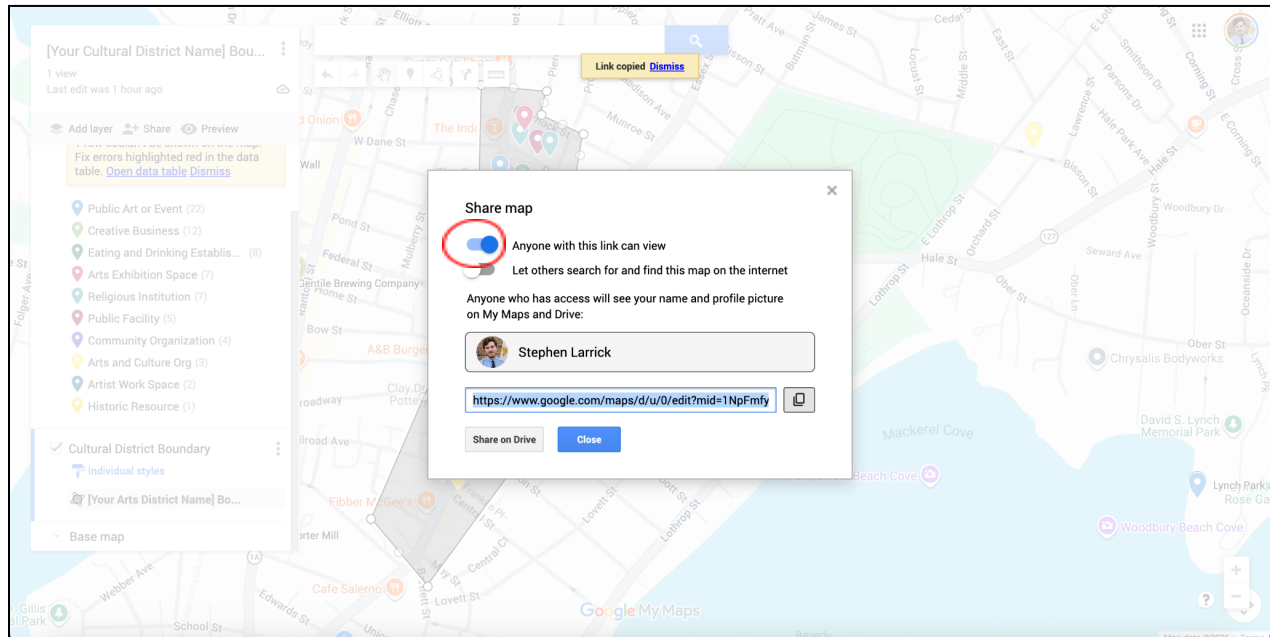
- Select “Google MyMap” as the type of Map
- Upload the file by browsing to your downloads folder or by dragging the file into the upload box.

Step 6. Share your MyMap URL (Optional)

- Click “Share” at the top of your layer Menu bar / under the Map Title



- Select “Anyone with this link can view”



- Copy the link (or click the copy button) and paste the URL in the MCC application in the “District Map” question asking for a “Map URL”

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GIS map of bo

* Map URL