

# **Step-By-Step Instructions: Create a Google Map of Voting Locations**

Issued by The Elections Group

# Table of Contents

Why Create a Google Map? .....	3
Step 1: Prepare a List of Voting Locations .....	6
Step 2: Create a Google Account .....	9
Step 3: Create a New Google Map .....	9
Step 4: Give Your Map a Title and Description.....	10
Step 5: Import Your List of Voting Locations .....	11
Step 6: Identify the Fields in Your List of Locations.....	13
Step 7 (Optional): Change the Icons on the Map .....	14
Step 8 (Optional): Rename the Map Layer .....	16
Step 9: Preview the Map.....	17
Step 10: Share the Map Publicly .....	18
Step 11: Embed the Map on Your Website .....	19
Making Changes to Your Map.....	21



The Elections Group, 2020

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. To view a copy of the license, visit [creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0).

# Why Create a Google Map?

---

Creating Google Maps of your vote centers, early voting sites, and/or ballot drop-off locations is a best practice for election officials. It is an excellent standard in order to provide an interactive, at-a-glance and convenient web-based tool that voters can use to plan their trip to cast a ballot.

By creating and sharing a Google Map of your locations, instead of just a static map (.pdf) or a long list of locations, your voters can engage with the map, zoom in and out, click on a location that interests them and obtain dates of service, hours and an address. Moreover, voters can also generate walking, driving, public transportation, and biking directions directly in the map.

Once you have created your first map, you will find that it's easy to create a new map for various needs and elections. Your maps will be hosted by Google, but managed and edited by you.

You can use Google Maps in a variety of ways.

- **Embed the map on your Elections website** on your 'Voting Locations' or 'Where to Vote' web page. Then, actively promote the link for this web page, and watch your visits rise!
- Proactively **share the link on social media**, perhaps with a screen capture of the map as your image/graphic.
- **Send the link to candidates, issue committees and community partners**, so that they can help to educate voters. Or better yet, share the 'embed code' with any other community partners who are willing to embed the map on their websites for voter information. (Note: They will not be able to edit the map; they will simply have the necessary code for the Google map to appear on their website.)
- **Target a neighborhood or jurisdiction**. Zoom in on your Google Map and take a screenshot of a neighborhood. Post the image on social media with the message, such as "Hey [Neighborhood] voters, did you know that there are 5 drop boxes in your neighborhood? They are open 10/26-11/3. Find them all at [link]."
- Call out the **ease of access on popular public transportation routes**. Take screenshots to show proximity to bus stops or train/light rail trains.

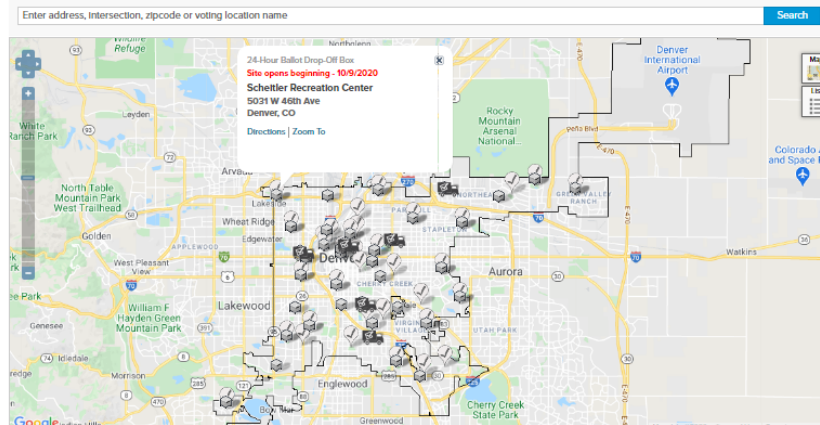
Following are some examples of jurisdictions around the nation that are using Google Maps to enhance their online elections information:

City and County of Denver Official Site / Denver Elections Division / Voter Information

## Voting Locations

November 2020 General Election

Type in your address to search for drop boxes or vote center locations and hours. Click the List icon on the map to view a list of sites near you.



<https://www.denvergov.org/content/denvergov/en/denver-elections-divison/voter-election-information/where-to-vote.html>

**King County**

Home How do I... Services About King County Departments

Search Kingcounty.gov

**Elections Home**

- How to vote
- Ballots
- Returning my ballot
- Ballot drop boxes**
- Vote centers

**Ballot drop boxes**

Return your ballot to a ballot drop box. Your ballot must be returned to a ballot drop box by 8 p.m. on Election Day. Plan ahead to avoid lines.

**24-hour drop boxes**

Open 24 hours a day beginning October 15  
Closes on Election Day, November 3 at 8:00 p.m.  
\* Drive-up ballot drop box

**Map** Satellite

Information for... Do more online Get help Español

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/elections/how-to-vote/ballots/returning-my-ballot/ballot-drop-boxes.aspx>



## Vote In Person in Baltimore City

Vote in Person at convenient vote centers all over Baltimore City. If you are registered to vote in Baltimore City, you can go to any of the following locations. You can also do Same Day Registration at any vote center.

- Purple Squares are Early Voting Centers open Oct 26-Nov 2 from 7am-8pm
- Yellow Checks are Election Day Vote Centers open Nov 3 from 7am-8pm



<https://www.baltimorevotes.org/vote-centers>

# Step 1: Prepare a List of Voting Locations

Create a Microsoft Excel **spreadsheet of your voting locations**, if you do not already have one. Save the file as a Microsoft Excel workbook (.xls or .xlsx).

The spreadsheet should include separate columns *with headers* for the following fields, and should include complete data for each voting location across the rows:

- Location Name
- Street Address
- City
- State
- Zip Code
- Dates of Operation
- Hours of Operation

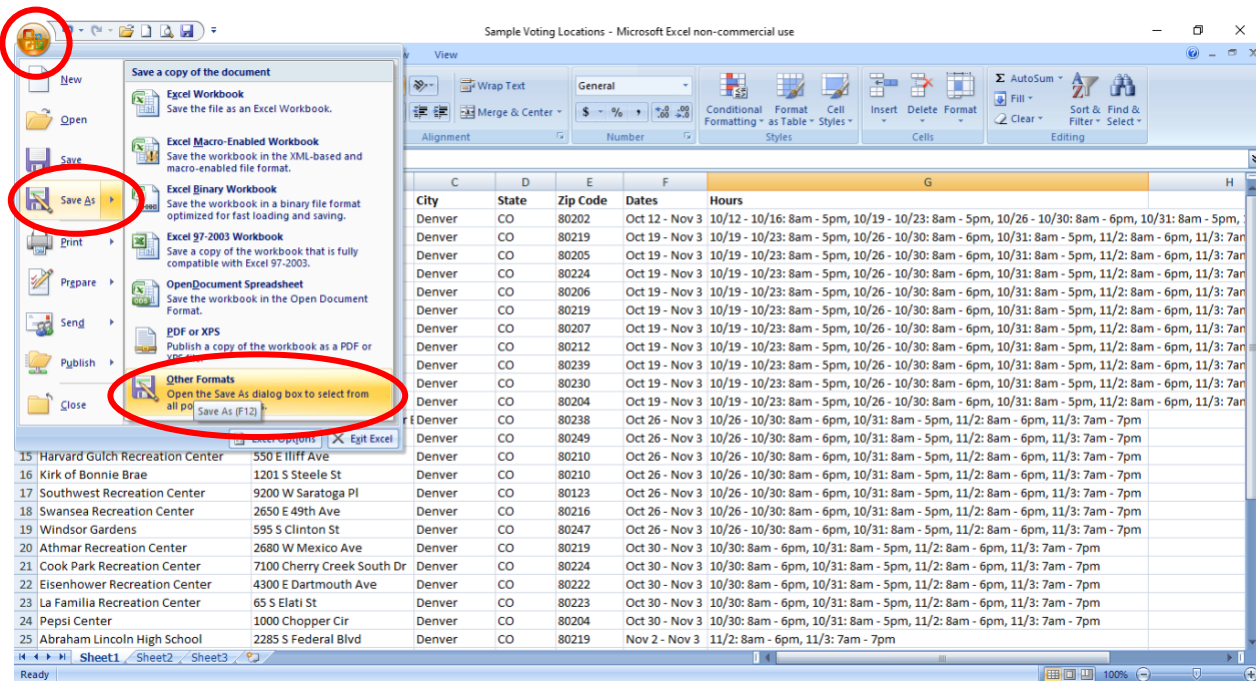
Please ensure accurate spelling and consistent formatting. The content that you enter into the spreadsheet will transfer to your map. *Tip: Limit punctuation for best map readability.*

If you don't have time for this effort, recruit a community volunteer or pollworker to assist you.

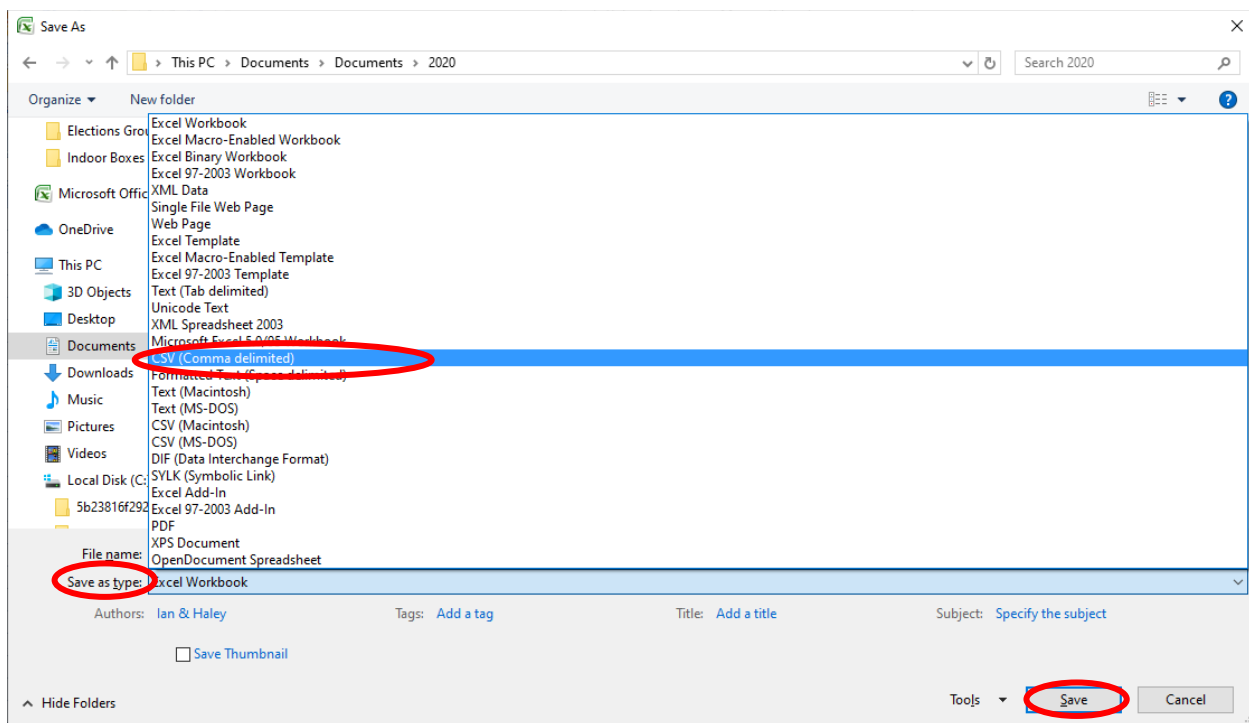
Here is a sample spreadsheet for reference:

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Location Name	Street Address	City	State	Zip Code	Dates	Hours
2	McNichols Civic Center Building	144 W Colfax Ave	Denver	CO	80202	Oct 12 - Nov 3	10/12 - 10/16: 8am - 5pm, 10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
3	Barnum Recreation Center	360 N Hooker St	Denver	CO	80219	Oct 19 - Nov 3	10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
4	Blair-Caldwell Library	2401 Welton St	Denver	CO	80205	Oct 19 - Nov 3	10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
5	Calvary Baptist Church of Denver	6500 E Girard Ave	Denver	CO	80224	Oct 19 - Nov 3	10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
6	Christ Church United Methodist	690 N Colorado Blvd	Denver	CO	80206	Oct 19 - Nov 3	10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
7	Harvey Park Recreation Center	2120 S Tennyson Way	Denver	CO	80219	Oct 19 - Nov 3	10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
8	Hiawatha Davis Jr Recreation Center	3334 N Holly St	Denver	CO	80207	Oct 19 - Nov 3	10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
9	Highland Recreation Center	2880 N Osceola St	Denver	CO	80212	Oct 19 - Nov 3	10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
10	Montbello Recreation Center	15555 E 53rd Ave	Denver	CO	80239	Oct 19 - Nov 3	10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
11	Montclair Recreation Center	729 N Ulster Way	Denver	CO	80230	Oct 19 - Nov 3	10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
12	Tivoli Student Union at Auraria	900 Auraria Pkwy	Denver	CO	80204	Oct 19 - Nov 3	10/19 - 10/23: 8am - 5pm, 10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
13	Central Park Recreation Center	9651 E Martin Luther King Jr E	Denver	CO	80238	Oct 26 - Nov 3	10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
14	Green Valley Ranch Recreation Center	4890 N Argonne Way	Denver	CO	80249	Oct 26 - Nov 3	10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
15	Harvard Gulch Recreation Center	550 E Iliff Ave	Denver	CO	80210	Oct 26 - Nov 3	10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
16	Kirk of Bonnie Brae	1201 S Steele St	Denver	CO	80210	Oct 26 - Nov 3	10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
17	Southwest Recreation Center	9200 W Saratoga Pl	Denver	CO	80123	Oct 26 - Nov 3	10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
18	Swansea Recreation Center	2650 E 49th Ave	Denver	CO	80216	Oct 26 - Nov 3	10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
19	Windsor Gardens	595 S Clinton St	Denver	CO	80247	Oct 26 - Nov 3	10/26 - 10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
20	Athmar Recreation Center	2880 W Mexico Ave	Denver	CO	80219	Oct 30 - Nov 3	10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
21	Cook Park Recreation Center	7100 Cherry Creek South Dr	Denver	CO	80224	Oct 30 - Nov 3	10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
22	Eisenhower Recreation Center	4300 E Dartmouth Ave	Denver	CO	80222	Oct 30 - Nov 3	10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
23	La Familia Recreation Center	65 S Elati St	Denver	CO	80223	Oct 30 - Nov 3	10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
24	Pepsi Center	1000 Chopper Cir	Denver	CO	80204	Oct 30 - Nov 3	10/30: 8am - 6pm, 10/31: 8am - 5pm, 11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm
25	Abraham Lincoln High School	2285 S Federal Blvd	Denver	CO	80219	Nov 2 - Nov 3	11/2: 8am - 6pm, 11/3: 7am - 7pm

Next you will need to save your spreadsheet as a *comma delimited file*. Click **File** (or the Windows icon), then **Save As**, then click **Other Formats**.



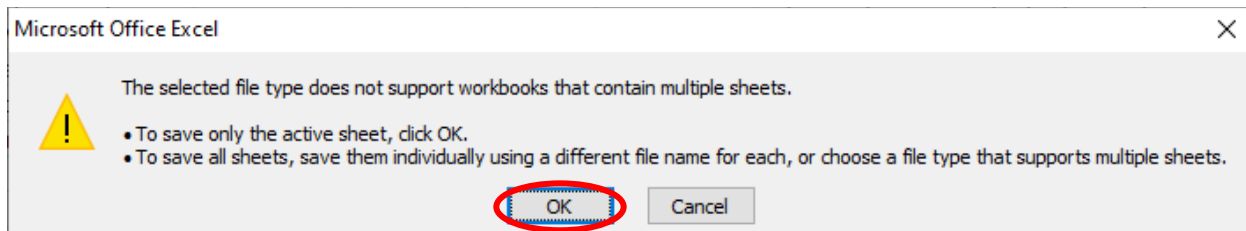
The Save As pop-up box will appear. Click next to *Save as type:* to open the list of file types. Select **CSV (comma delimited)**. Click **Save**.



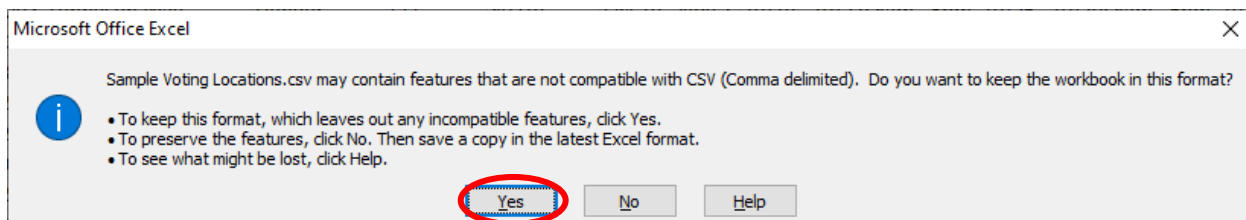
This document was created as part of the Election Superheroes Project, with the help of current and former election officials around the country, for the benefit of all current election officials. Election officials are superheroes!



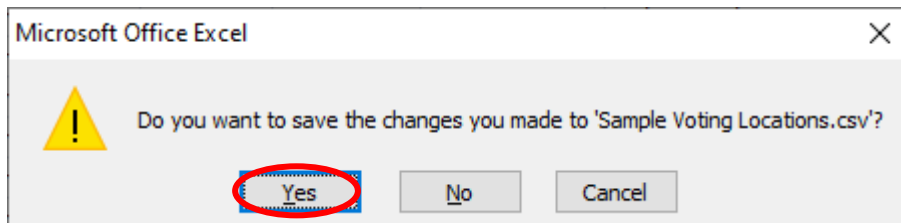
If the following pop-up box appears, click **OK**.



If the following pop-up box appears, click **Yes**.



Click **Yes** in the following pop-up box.



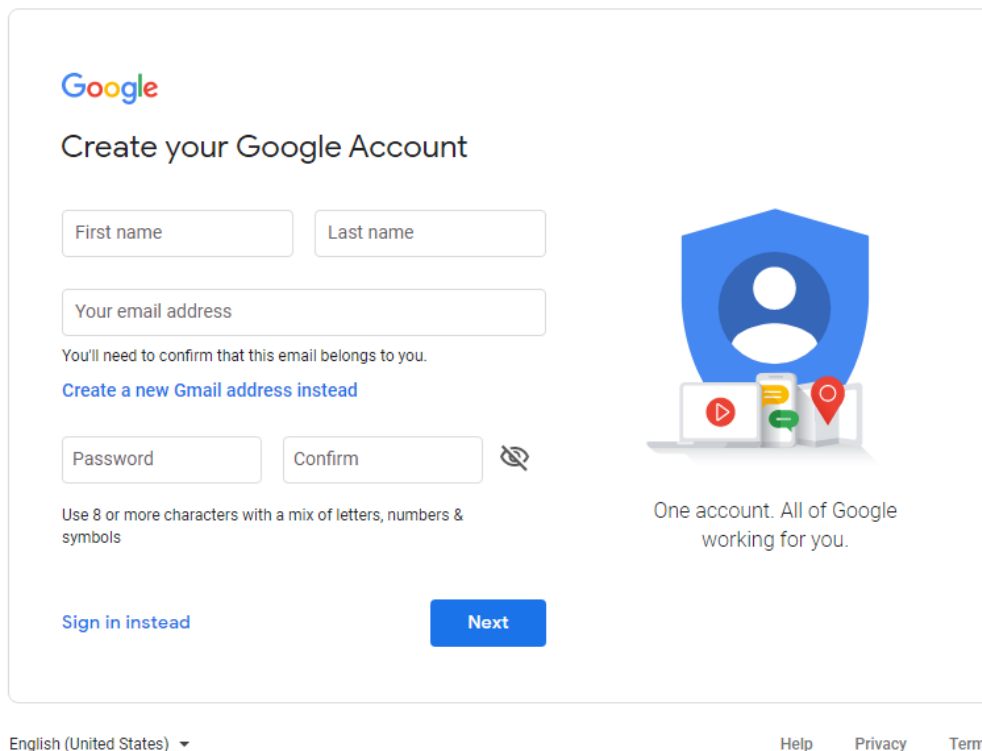
**Close** the Excel file.



## Step 2: Create a Google Account

---

Create a Google account at <https://accounts.google.com>, if you do not already have one. This is essential to ensure that you can save maps under your account and make future edits, if necessary. You can opt to create a new Gmail address, or choose to use your professional email address.

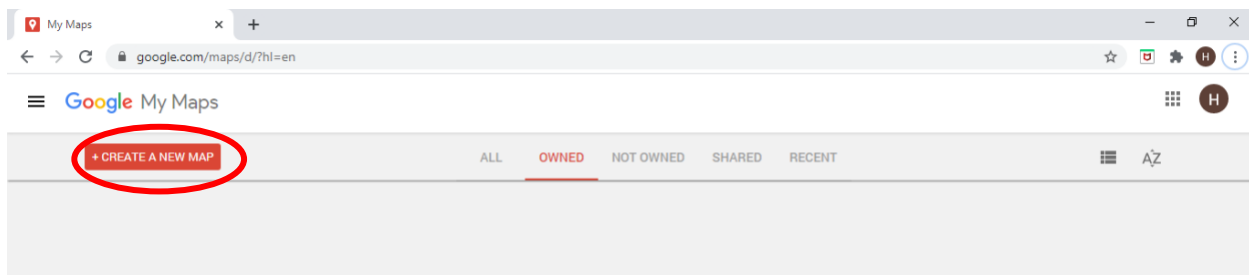


The screenshot shows the Google Account creation interface. At the top is the Google logo, followed by the heading "Create your Google Account". Below this are input fields for "First name", "Last name", and "Your email address". A note states, "You'll need to confirm that this email belongs to you." Below the email field is a link that says "Create a new Gmail address instead". There are also fields for "Password" and "Confirm" with a strength indicator icon. A text prompt below the password fields says, "Use 8 or more characters with a mix of letters, numbers & symbols". To the right of the form is a graphic of a blue shield with a white person icon, and below it, icons for YouTube, Gmail, and Maps. Text next to the graphic says, "One account. All of Google working for you." At the bottom left is a link "Sign in instead" and at the bottom right is a blue "Next" button. At the very bottom of the page, there is a language selector set to "English (United States)" and links for "Help", "Privacy", and "Terms".

## Step 3: Create a New Google Map

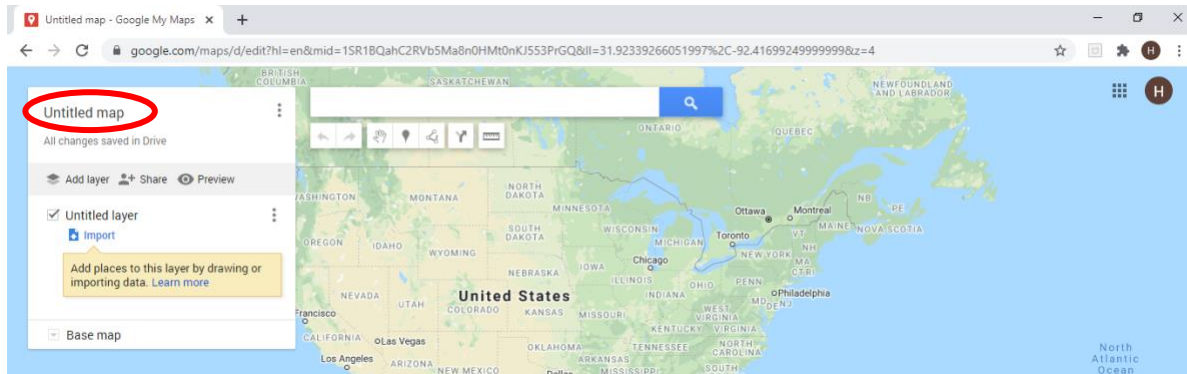
---

While you are still logged in to your Google account, open your web browser to **Google My Maps** at <https://mymaps.google.com>. Click **Get Started**. Click **Create a New Map**.

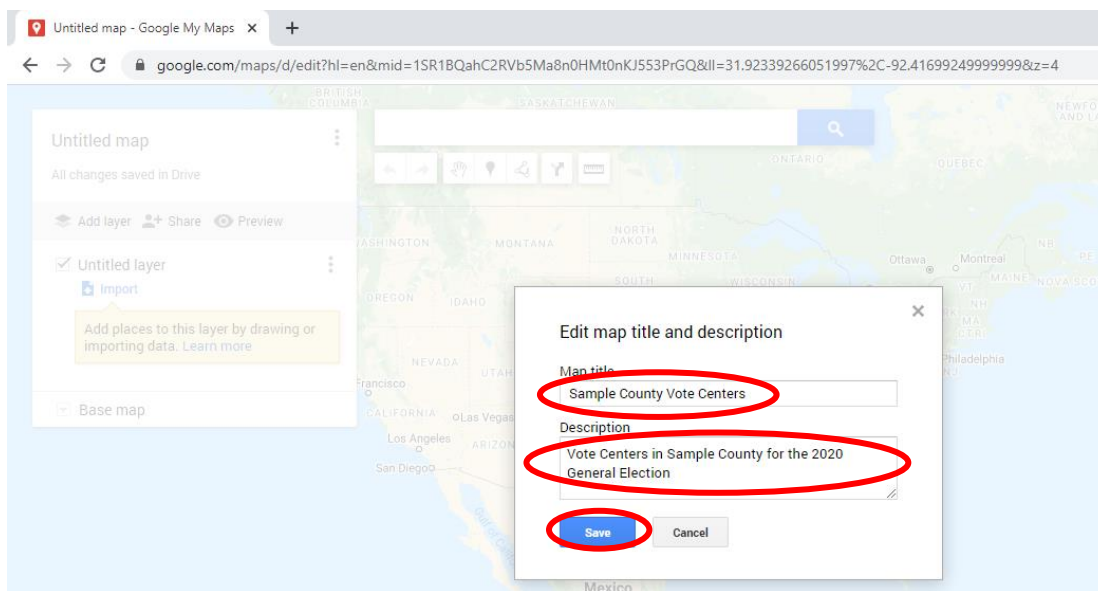


## Step 4: Give Your Map a Title and Description

On the left-hand side, click on the words **Untitled map**.



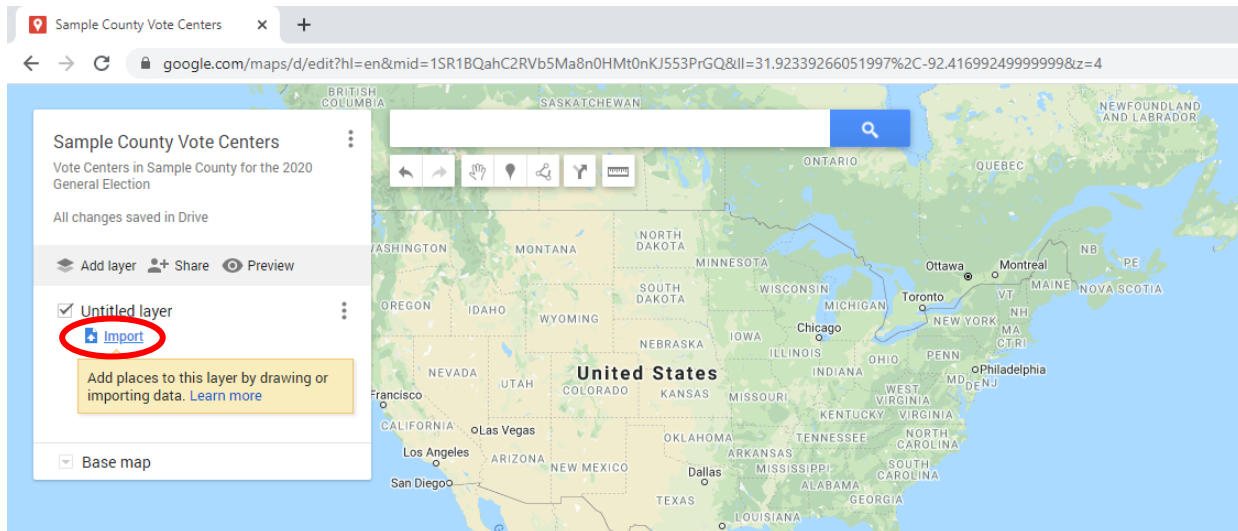
In the pop-up box titled *Edit map title and description*, type a concise title (3-4 words are ideal) and description for your map. Click **Save**.



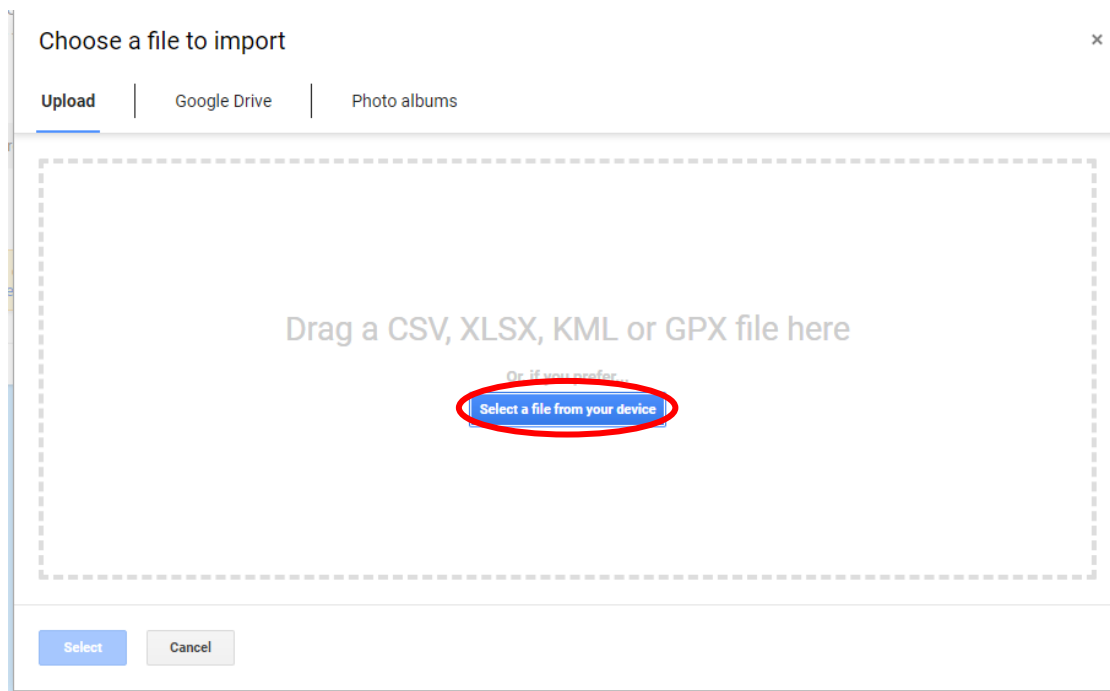
# Step 5: Import Your List of Voting Locations

In this step, you will ‘bring in’ your list of voting locations from the spreadsheet that you created.

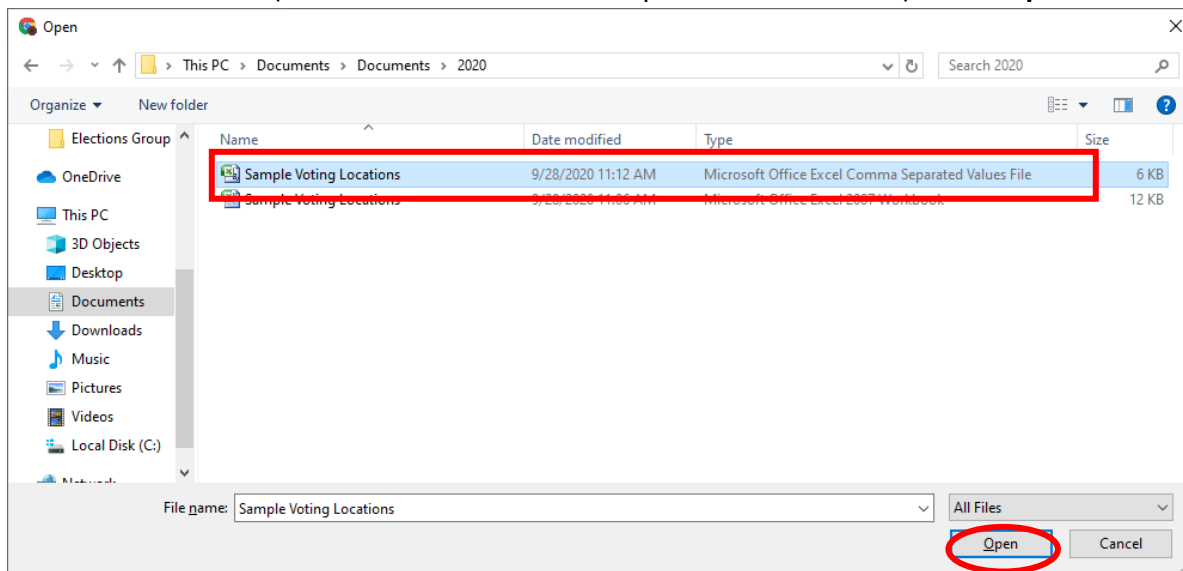
On the left-hand side of your map, beneath *Untitled Layer*, click on **Import**.



Click **Select a file from your device**.



In the 'Open' pop-up box, browse to where you have saved your spreadsheet of voting locations. **Select the .CSV file (Microsoft Excel Comma Separated Values File).** Click **Open**.



## Step 6: Identify the Fields in Your List of Locations

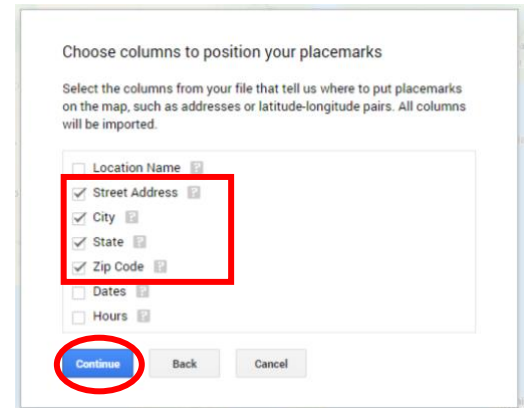
---

A pop-up box will appear titled *Choose columns to position your placemarks*. This is asking you to identify which columns in your spreadsheet have 'address' data that must be mapped.

Check the boxes titled

- ✓ Street Address
- ✓ City
- ✓ State
- ✓ Zip Code

Click **Continue**.



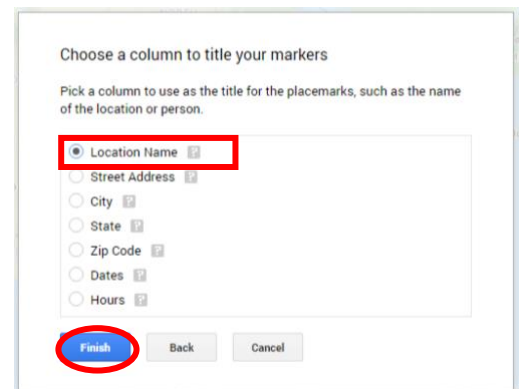
The dialog box is titled "Choose columns to position your placemarks". It contains the instruction: "Select the columns from your file that tell us where to put placemarks on the map, such as addresses or latitude-longitude pairs. All columns will be imported." Below this, there is a list of columns with checkboxes: "Location Name" (unchecked), "Street Address" (checked), "City" (checked), "State" (checked), "Zip Code" (checked), "Dates" (unchecked), and "Hours" (unchecked). A red rectangle highlights the "Street Address", "City", "State", and "Zip Code" options. At the bottom, there are three buttons: "Continue" (highlighted with a red circle), "Back", and "Cancel".

Another pop-up box will appear titled *Choose a column to title your markers*. This is asking you to identify which column in your spreadsheet has the name for each voting location.

Check the box titled:

- Location Name

Click **Finish**. Wait a few moments while your new map is created!



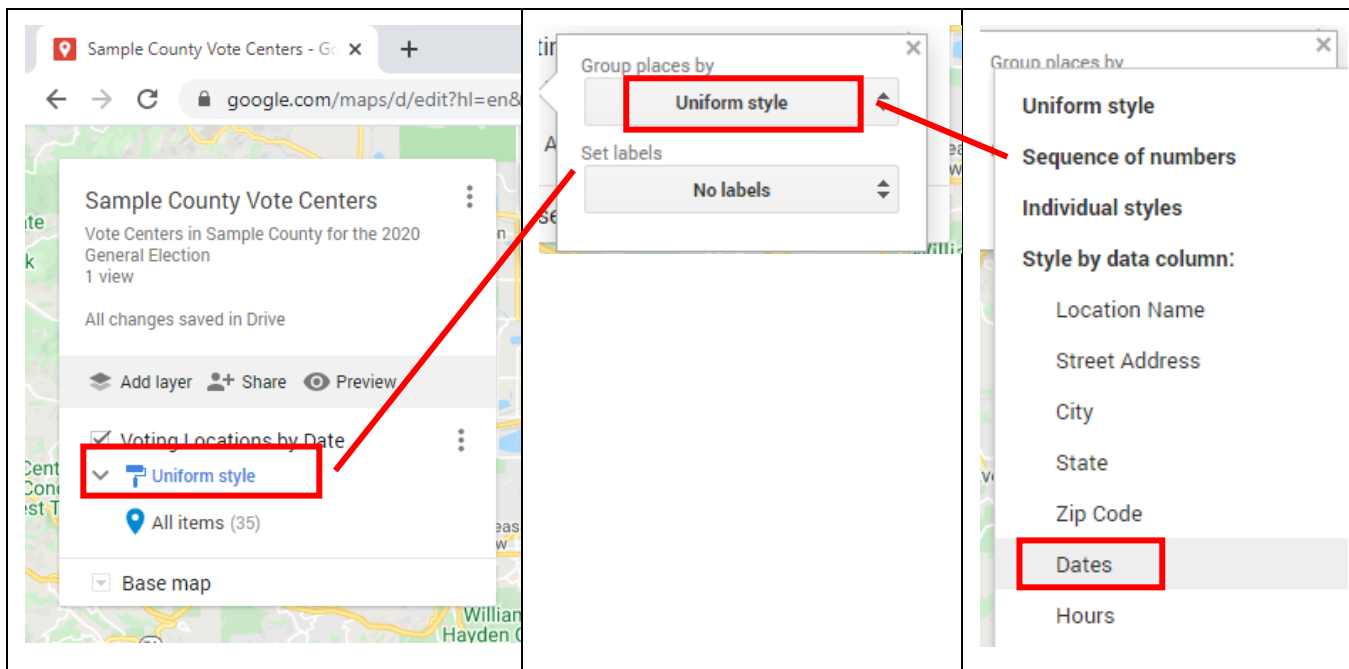
The dialog box is titled "Choose a column to title your markers". It contains the instruction: "Pick a column to use as the title for the placemarks, such as the name of the location or person." Below this, there is a list of columns with radio buttons: "Location Name" (selected), "Street Address" (unselected), "City" (unselected), "State" (unselected), "Zip Code" (unselected), "Dates" (unselected), and "Hours" (unselected). A red rectangle highlights the "Location Name" option. At the bottom, there are three buttons: "Finish" (highlighted with a red circle), "Back", and "Cancel".

## Step 7 (Optional): Change the Icons on the Map

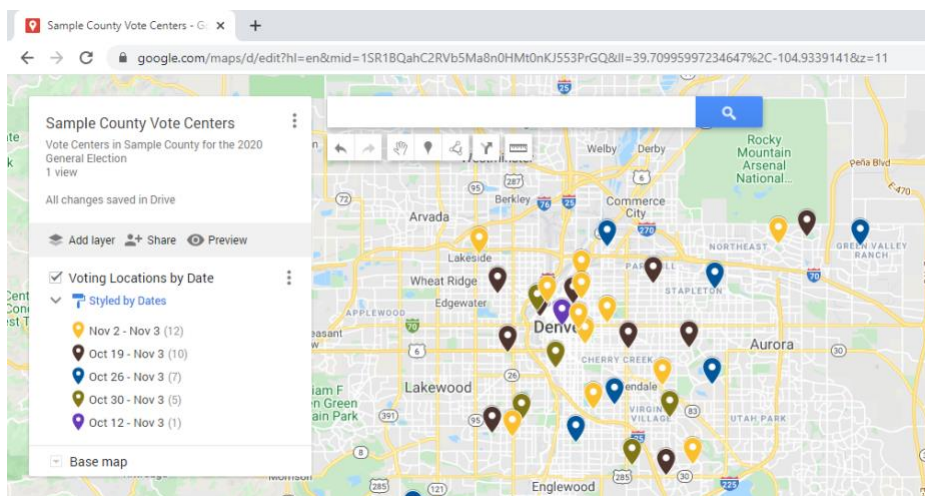
The map will automatically populate all locations with a blue upside-down teardrop. You may want to modify these icons with different colors or shapes to differentiate between phases or types of voting locations.

For example, here's how to **differentiate voting locations** that open on different dates:

On the left-hand side of the map, click on the words **Uniform style**. Click the drop-down menu to 'Group Places by'. Then, select **Dates**.

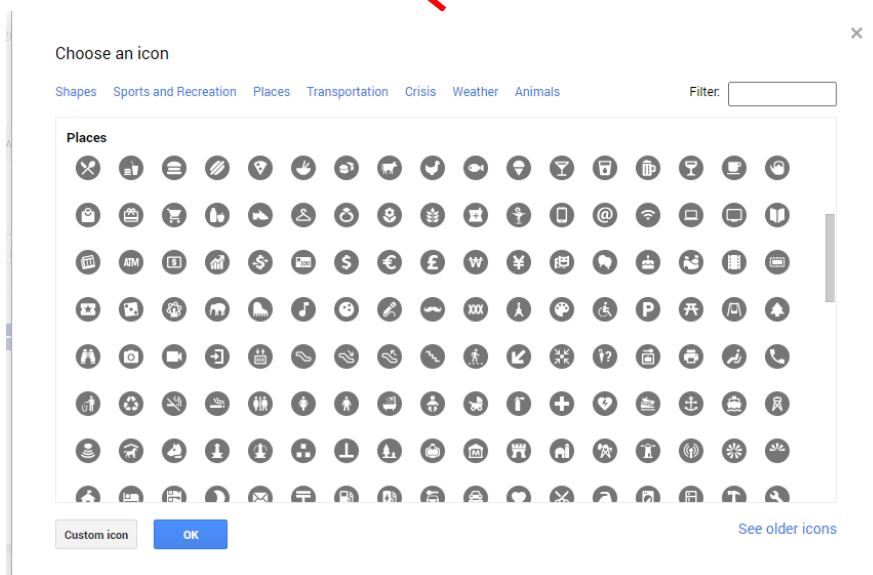
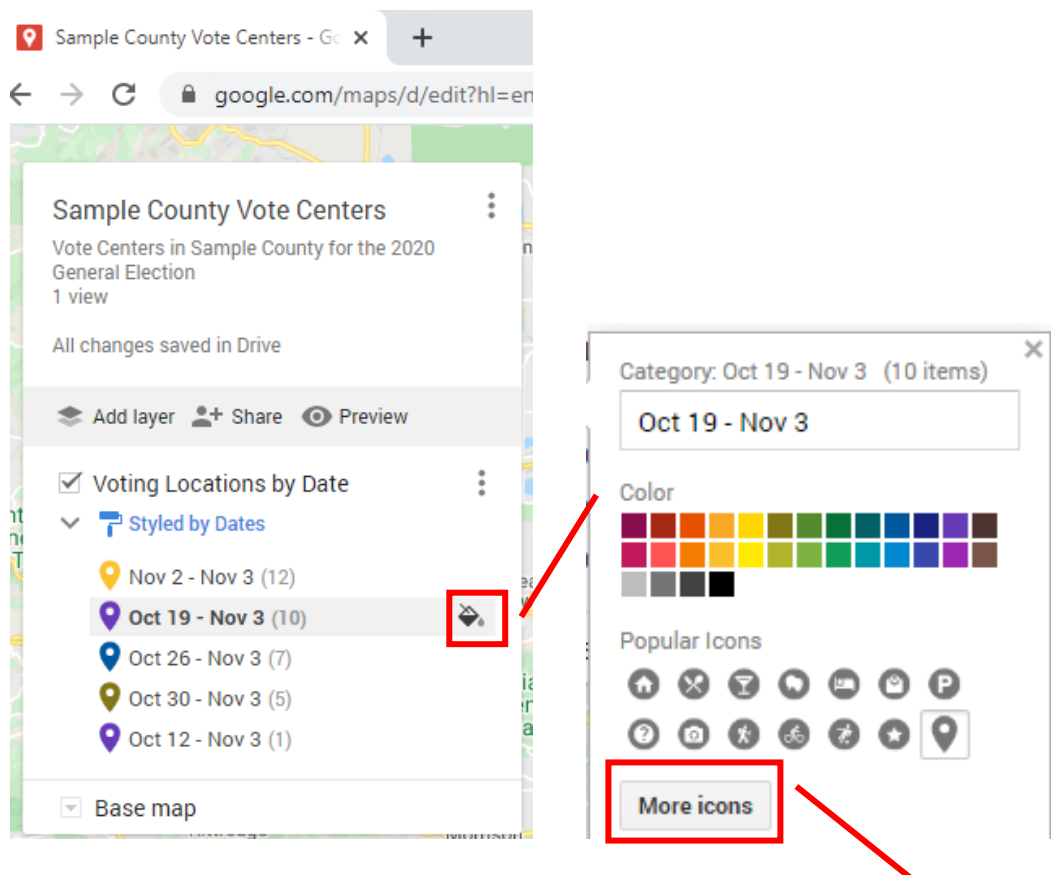


The map will automatically update the teardrops with a unique color for each phase of voting.



## To change the shape and color of icons:

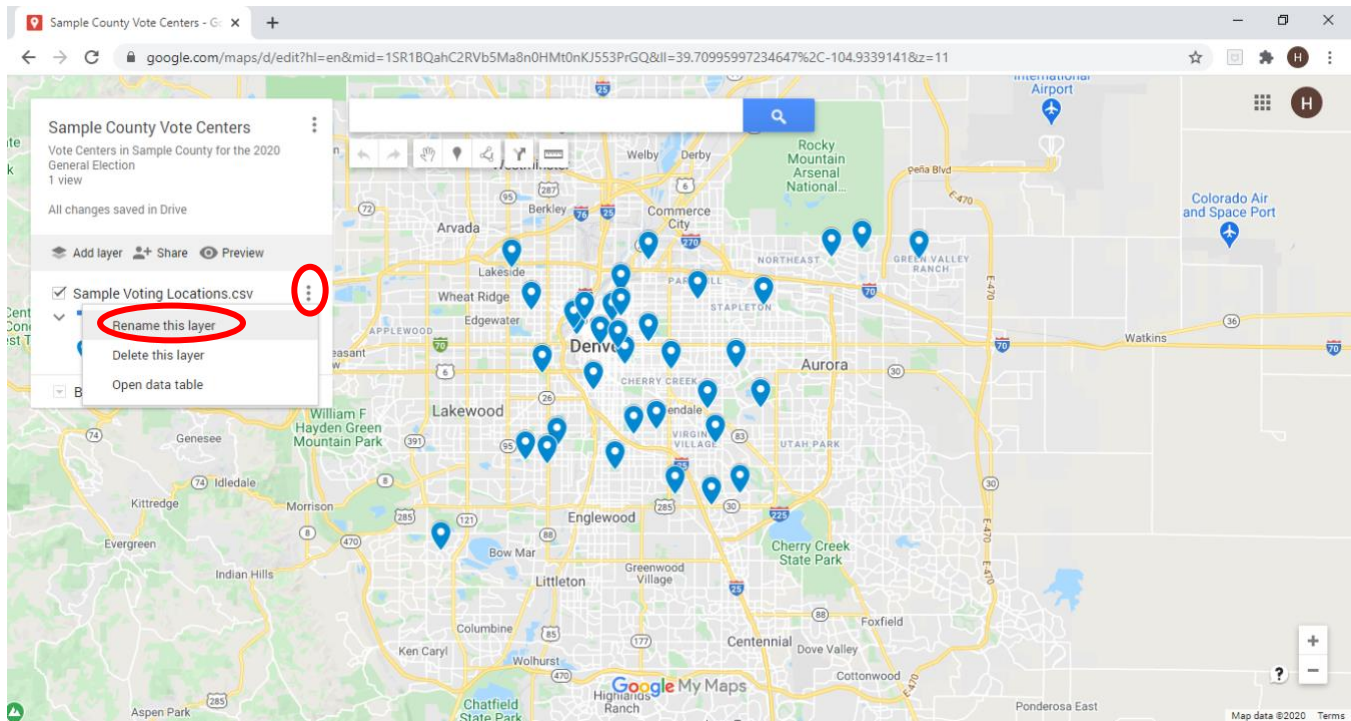
If you don't like the color scheme, on the left-hand side of the map, hover over the colored teardrops on the legend. You'll see a paint can symbol. Click on the paint can to choose a new color or icon shape from a wide menu. (You'll also see an option to upload a custom icon, which you could create with design software.)



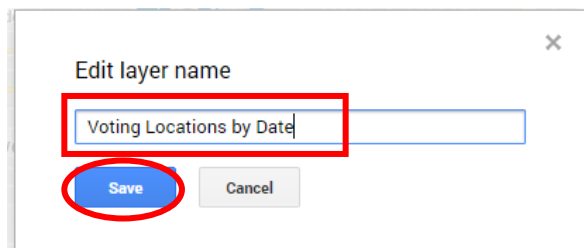


## Step 8 (Optional): Rename the Map Layer

You may want to change the name of the layer, which will automatically populate with the name of your .CSV file. On the left-hand side, click on the vertical ellipses : next to the name of your .csv file. Then click **Rename this layer**.

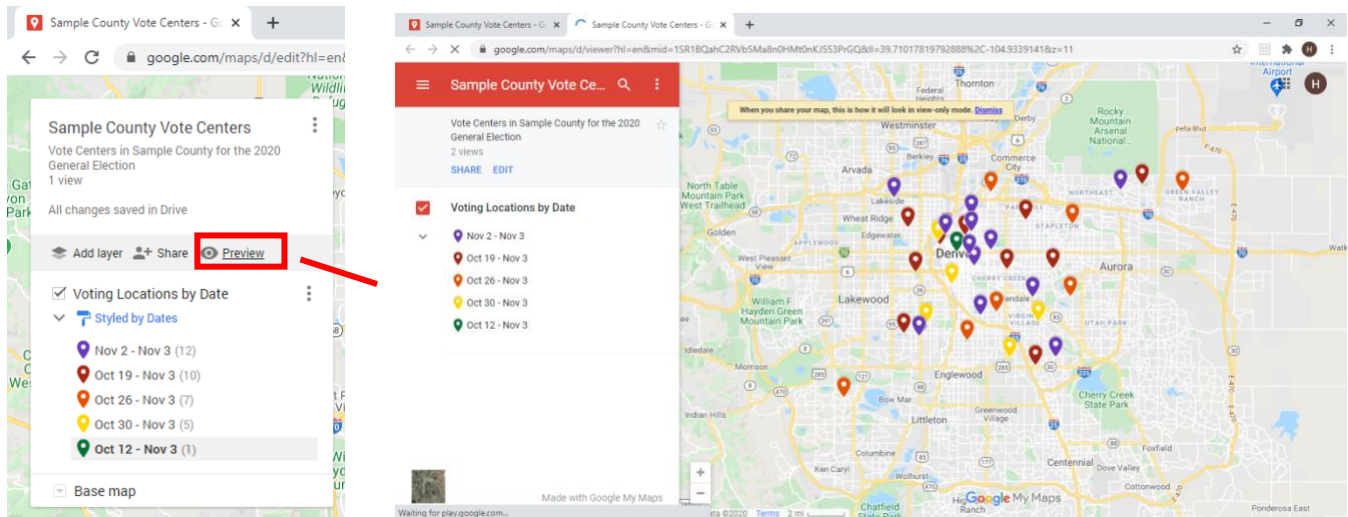


In the pop-up box type a new name, such as Voting Locations by Date. Click **Save**.



## Step 9: Preview the Map

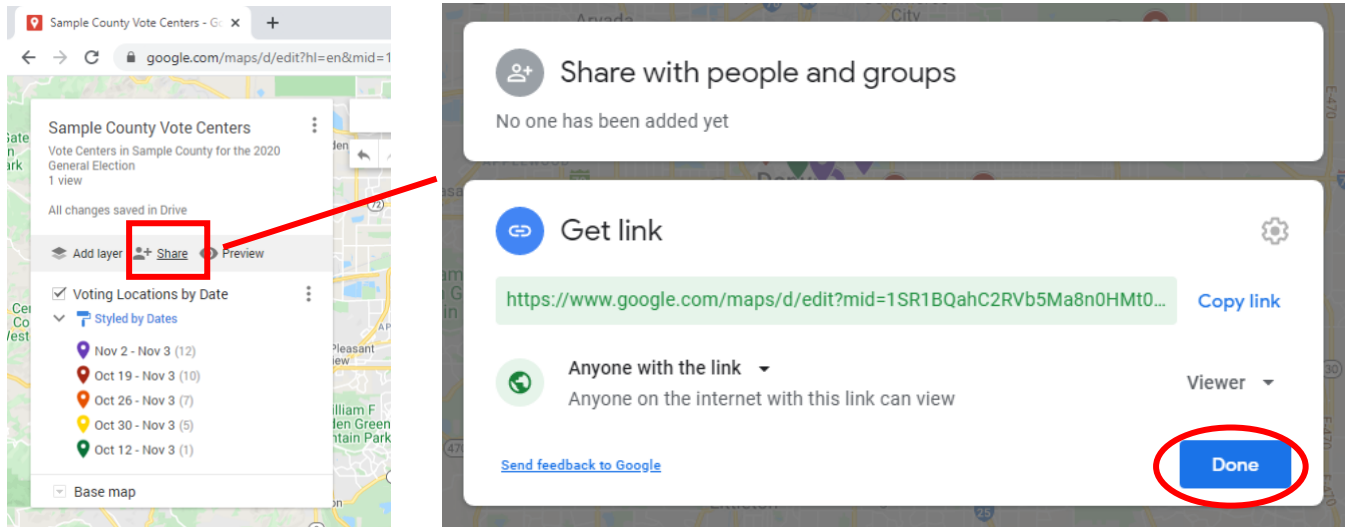
Before sharing the map publicly, you may want to preview to see how it will appear to the public. On the left-hand side, click **Preview**. It will open in a new tab in your web browser in preview-mode only.



# Step 10: Share the Map Publicly

On the left-hand side, click **Share**.

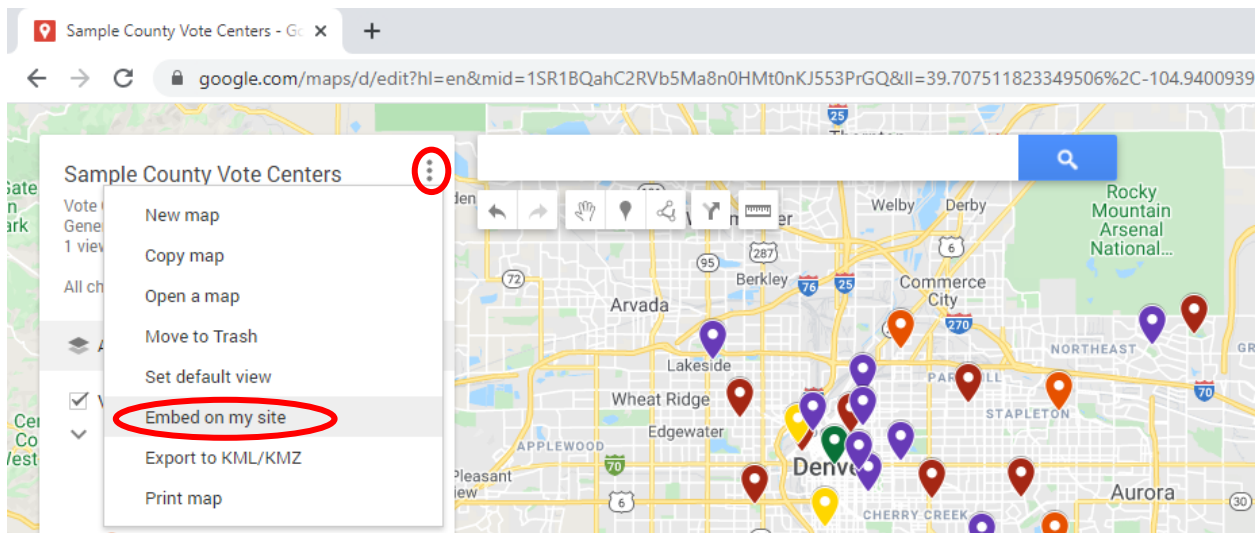
In the pop-up box, click on the box titled **Get Link**. On the drop-down, change the sharing mode to *Anyone with the Link*. Click **Done**. This will make your map publicly available.



# Step 11: Embed the Map on Your Website

You *must* follow Step 9: Share the Map Publicly (above) to make the map public, before you can embed the map on your website.

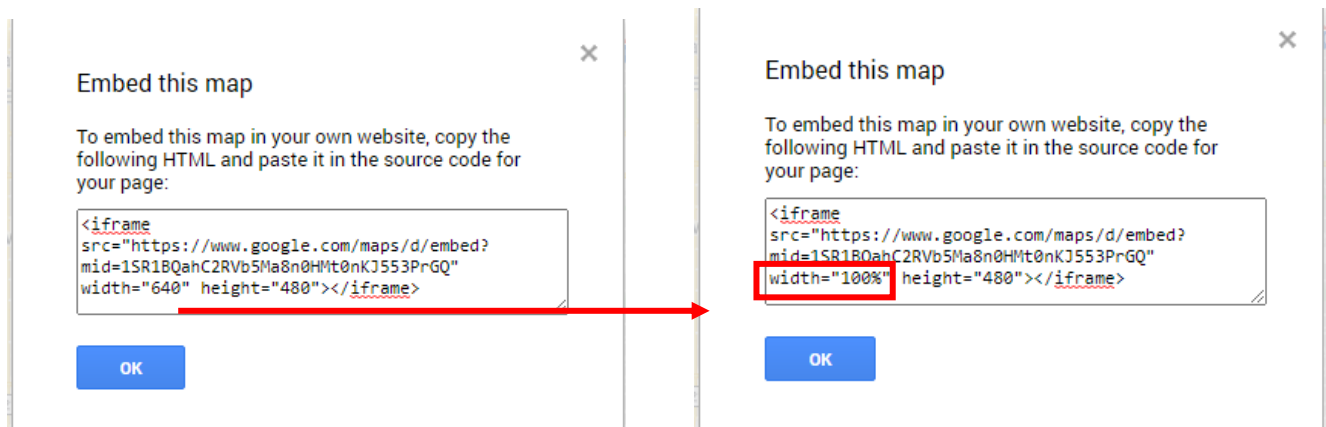
On the left-hand side, click the top vertical ellipsis ⋮. On the drop-down menu, click **Embed on my site**.



## Edit the Code:

A pop-up box will appear with the iframe source code (in HTML) for your Google map.

Inside the text box, you will see width="640". Please **delete 640** and **type 100%**



(Do not delete the quote marks.) This change will ensure that the map will always fill the width of a web page for maximum readability, whether viewed on a desktop computer or mobile device, and will not exceed the device width.

## Copy the Code:

Highlight the code and hit **CTRL+C** to copy. Click **OK**.

## Embed the Code on Your Web Page:

Open your jurisdiction's website management system. Navigate to the web page on which the map should appear, such as your 'Vote Centers' or 'Where to Vote' web page.


Ensure that you are editing the HTML (source code) of your web page, and not the text-view of your web page. Usually there is an option to toggle between views, such as a button that reads <Source>.

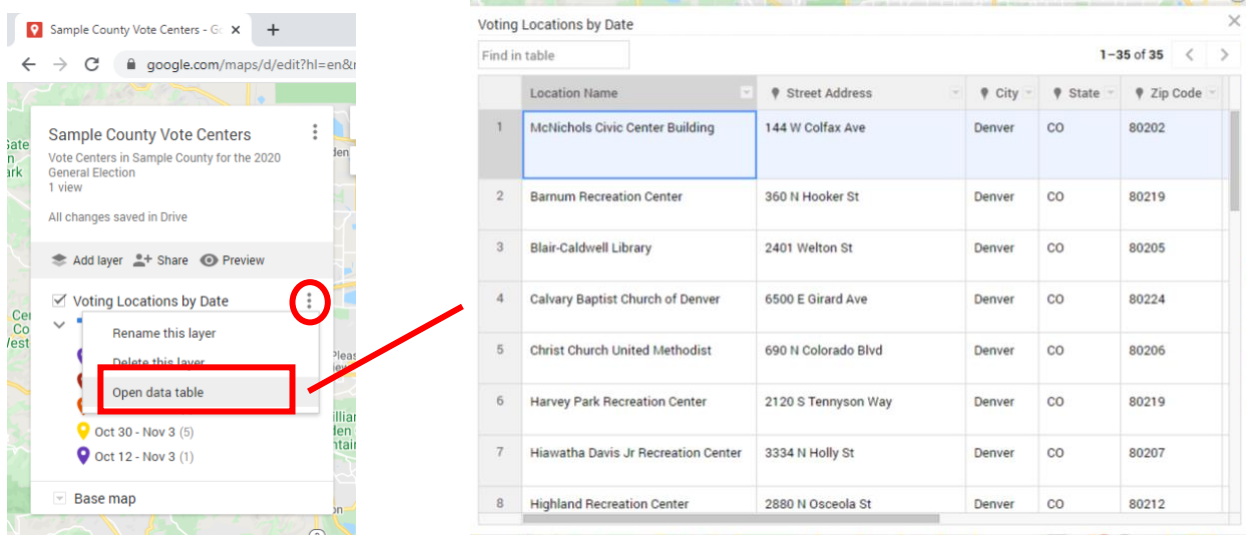
Click **CTRL+P** to paste the code into the correct location on the HTML version of your web page. (You may need assistance from your web master or IT staff if you are not familiar with HTML.)

Save the page. Be sure to preview the web page before publishing, to ensure that the map renders correctly.

# Making Changes to Your Map

You can make changes to your map at any time after it has been shared. Simply log in to your Google account, go to <https://www.google.com/maps/about/mymaps/> and navigate to your map. You can change the name, icons, colors and other elements.

To make changes to your list of voting locations, click on the lower vertical ellipses  and click **Open Data Table**. You can make text changes to the list of voting locations, add a location to the table, or delete a location from the list.



The image shows two parts of the Google Maps interface. On the left, a map titled 'Sample County Vote Centers' is displayed. A menu for the 'Voting Locations by Date' layer is open, showing options: 'Rename this layer', 'Delete this layer', and 'Open data table'. The 'Open data table' option is highlighted with a red box. A red arrow points from this box to the right. On the right, a window titled 'Voting Locations by Date' displays a table with 8 rows of data. The first row is highlighted in blue.

	Location Name	Street Address	City	State	Zip Code
1	McNichols Civic Center Building	144 W Colfax Ave	Denver	CO	80202
2	Barnum Recreation Center	360 N Hooker St	Denver	CO	80219
3	Blair-Caldwell Library	2401 Welton St	Denver	CO	80205
4	Calvary Baptist Church of Denver	6500 E Girard Ave	Denver	CO	80224
5	Christ Church United Methodist	690 N Colorado Blvd	Denver	CO	80206
6	Harvey Park Recreation Center	2120 S Tennyson Way	Denver	CO	80219
7	Hiawatha Davis Jr Recreation Center	3334 N Holly St	Denver	CO	80207
8	Highland Recreation Center	2880 N Osceola St	Denver	CO	80212

Any changes will automatically be implemented by Google maps. Even though you change the list of locations or content of the map, the URL and source code will NOT change. You do not need to re-share or re-embed the source code in order for changes to take effect.