

VilasGEO Online Mapping Quick Reference

Included here is a basic rundown of functionality found in the VilasGEO online mapping site and its associated maps, hubs and tools. The most commonly-used maps and tools are located right on the main page.

Additional data is provided in one of numerous purpose-specific solutions hubs which are also accessible from the main VilasGEO page.

Contact: Land Information Director | 715-479-3790 | adgras@vilascountywi.gov

- VilasGEO – <https://geo.vilascountywi.gov>
- Vilas County Land Information Department – <https://www.vilascountywi.gov/landinfo>

General Layout

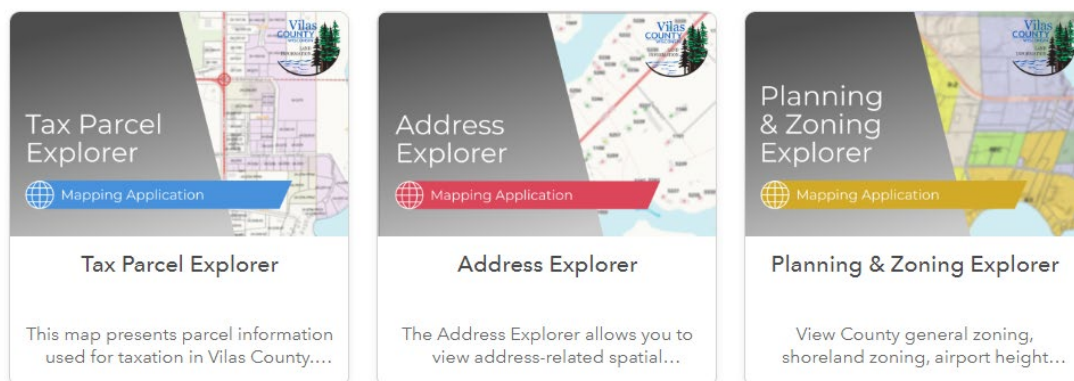
- Content and pages within the VilasGEO system are color-coded by topic. Since there are a lot of maps, sites and tools available to the user, this is designed to help easily identify the purpose of the various apps and pages.
- The VilasGEO page has links to the Vilas County website, as well as the Land Information Department webpage at the very top. The Land Info page is a good place to start when looking for systems information and links related to land information, mapping, addressing and property listing.



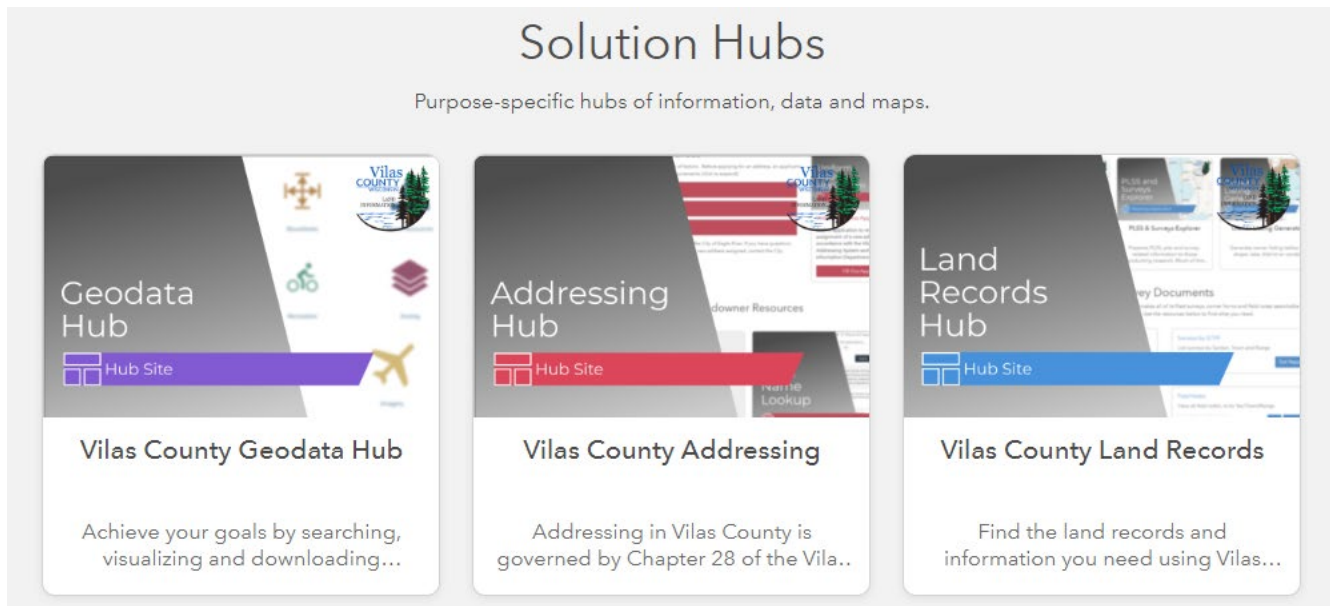
- The next section on the VilasGEO page is the Featured Apps section. The items presented here are some of the more popular mapping applications available from Vilas County. Click the black title text to launch an app. Each featured app is also located in a solutions hub.

Featured Apps

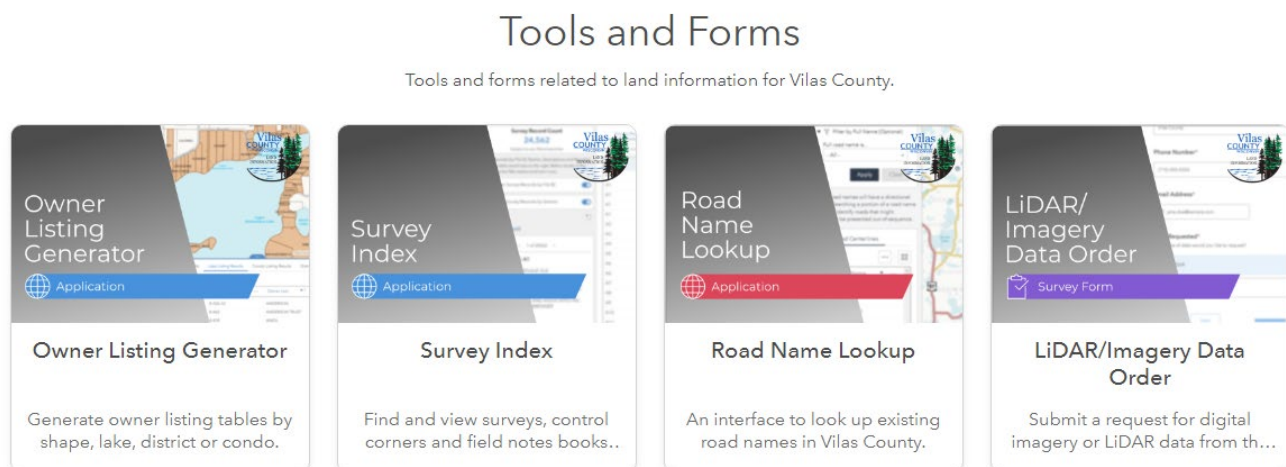
These are the primary, featured mapping applications for Vilas County, created by the Land Information Office.



- Below the featured apps are links to the solutions hubs. These are content-specific sites that serve up maps, information and tools related to a particular topic. For example, if you're looking for the address change lookup tool which isn't on the main VilasGEO page, look in the Addressing Hub.



- Last on the main VilasGEO page are Tools and Forms. Similar to the Featured Apps, these are some of the more popular items from Vilas County that aren't necessarily focused on retrieving information directly from a map.



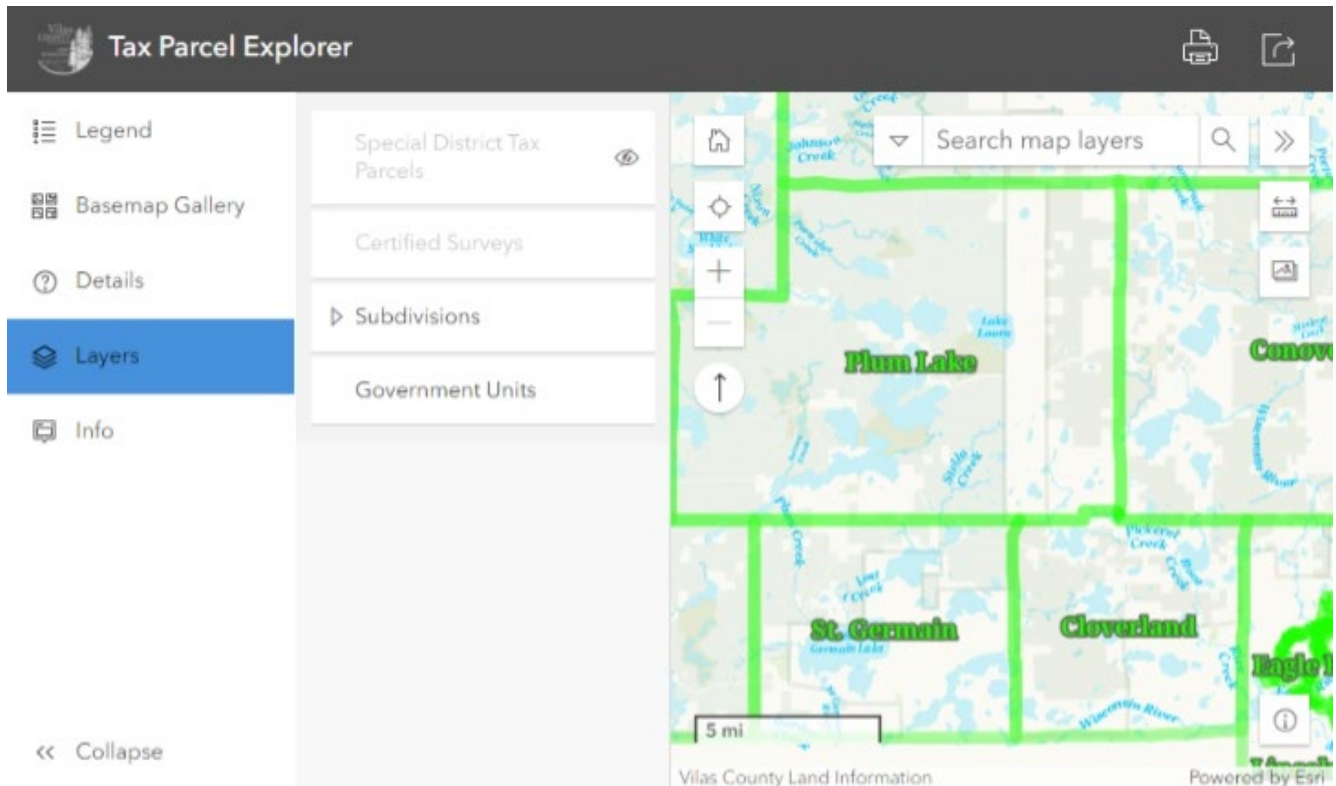
Mapping Applications/Explorers

- The maps designated as “Explorer” are focused mapping applications that provide information and tools related to a very specific topic. For instance, do not expect to find zoning information in the Address Explorer. Fortunately, if you're in one explorer and need to view information from another, there is a way to quickly open a different map right from within your current map (more on this later).

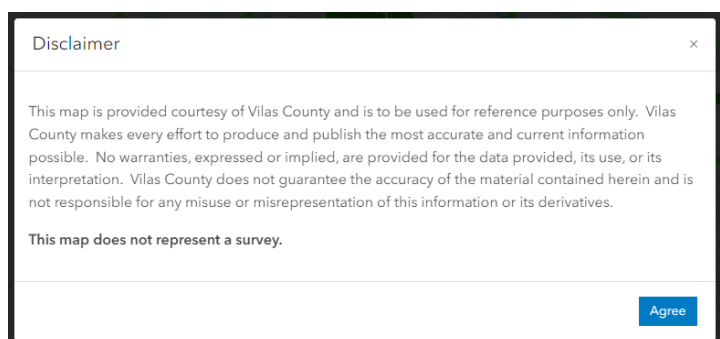
- Aside from content, not all explorers are identical in their functionality, layout and tools. For instance, the Tax Parcel Explorer has many basemaps to choose from, including topographic and four years of air photos. Conversely, the Address Explorer only has a basemap toggle button to switch between the most current imagery and a plain basemap showing lands and buildings. The offerings available in each Explorer is based on the perceived usage considering the content present in the map.

Mapping Explorer Usage

The Tax Parcel Explorer (the most popular one) will be used to illustrate most of the explorer functionality.



- **Disclaimer:** Yes, we need to show this every time (and you can view this again by clicking the button in the lower-right of the map window). Online maps are often used for purposes other than general reference. Vilas County's maps do not convey ownership, substitute for a survey, or necessarily represent the official status of a given feature. Please use the maps responsibly.



- **Map Interaction:** The left-hand side of the explorer window provides tools for interacting with and modifying the map. From here you can typically view a map legend, change basemaps (the background behind the main map data), turn on/off layers and view feature information resulting from clicking on the map (more information on this later). Sometimes additional information/links related to the map topic are

also available here. Clicking on a tool in the far-left vertical bar will open the associated tool/information in a pane immediately to its right.

- **Map Navigation:** The left-hand side of the map window provides map navigation tools. Clicking the home button will zoom you to the default map extent. Clicking the crosshair button will show your current location and zoom you there. The plus and minus buttons will zoom you in and out (as will your mouse wheel or a pinch-zoom, etc.). To zoom to a box you draw, shift-click and drag.

Sometimes an arrow button is provided to not only show you north, but also to reorient the top of your screen to north if you have rotated your map (right-click drag). You can also reorient your map by using these keyboard shortcuts: “a” to rotate counter-clockwise, “d” to rotate clockwise, “n” to return to north being up.

To move around the map simply click and drag, or use your keyboard arrow keys.



- **Tools:** In the upper-right of the window you'll find various tools including the ability to search, measure, print and share.



Searching: The down-arrow on the left side of the search box can be used to specify the map layer on which your search will be performed, or to just show you which layers can be searched. In most cases it is advisable not to worry about choosing a specific layer and just searching all data. Some searches are set up to be an exact match, but some will return a partial match. In cases such as the latter, less information entered may return more results, but only a small number of results will be returned (searching last name “Smith” will only return six results and not the +100 that actually exist).

If searching for an owner name, it is recommended that you use the [Ascent Land Records Suite \(ALRS\)](#) and then click into the map through the results screen. Using ALRS you can filter and get more information about your search results which will equal more success. View our [ALRS Quick Reference](#) document from our Department [FAQ page](#) to get more information.



Measuring: This tool will show measurement or location results on the fly. Units can be changed for distance, area or coordinate depending on the tool selected. Additional functionality is available for the coordinate tool by clicking the down arrow in the bottom-right of the tool.



Printing/Sharing: A screenshot (button below search and measure tools) can be taken of your map for your specified area, and may include a legend, current popup information, and a title. This screenshot can be downloaded as an image.



There is also a print tool in the upper-right header bar which, after clicking “Export”, will open your browser’s print window and will print exactly what you see on the screen – no more scale changes and data disappearing! The size of the map on your print will depend on the size of your browser window; changing the orientation of the page may help to fit the entire map on the page.



You can even share your map without ever having to create any sort of file. Using the Share tool will allow you to copy a link and share it with anybody. When someone clicks on the link it will open the current map and zoom them to the extent of the map on your screen when the link was copied. The link will only show the recipient the default layer visibility, and will not reflect any layers that were turned on or off.

Print functionality similar to the previous version of County online mapping apps is unavailable in the various map explorers, but is available when creating a custom map (as is drawing/sketching on the map; more on this later). If none of the printing/sharing tools suit your needs, it is recommended to simply use your computer's screenshot/snipping tool to capture the desired map area and paste it into a word processing template for sharing or archiving.

- **Feature Information:** To get information about a map feature, simply click on it and if information is available it will show in the info pane to the left. No longer does a popup appear on top of the map and obscure your vision of the map below! The information windows often include not only information about the feature, but also links to other relevant data or sites. For example, in the Tax Parcel Explorer, clicking on a tax parcel will show you a link to the parcel record in ALRS and the permit management suite (APM), a link to LandShark for deeds, the County survey index tool, and even some surveys for the property (if any exist; this is not necessarily an exhaustive list).

In addition, clicking on a tax parcel in any map explorer will provide links to other map explorers (at the bottom of the info pane). The link will open the new map and zoom right to that parcel.

Clicking on the map will return information for everything under the cursor in the order of the map layers. Scrolling to the bottom of the info pane may reveal information from other map layers which are minimized by default. In the Tax Parcel Explorer, this capability makes it easy for you to not only get parcel information, but also to know which section/town/range you are in, along with any plat or certified survey (CSM) information.

Unique Explorer Functionality

Here are some highlights of the differences between the various explorers:

- **Tax Parcel Explorer:** Choose from many basemaps and search by owner's last name (limited results are returned).
- **Address Explorer:** Toggle the basemap between plain and air photo.
- **Planning & Zoning Explorer:** Choose from many basemaps and toggle many planning & zoning-related layers.
- **PLSS & Surveys Explorer:** View right-of-way plats along with prominent control data.
- **Recreation Explorer:** Search by owner's last name (limited results are returned). Toggle groups of layers based on the recreation type/season. Also filter summer or winter silent sports by activity. Land Access parcels highlight open MFL parcels, and parcel owners' names appear on the map.
- **Voting Information Explorer:** Easily view parcels and addresses overlaid on your choice of voting information (aldermanic district, municipal ward, County district).
- **USNG Explorer:** (In Recreation Hub) View the County with a US National Grid (USNG) overlay. Clicking on a grid tile will allow you to download a 1:1,000 or 1:10,000 geo-enabled gridded topo or air photo PDF map.

Creating a Custom Map

- The pre-made map explorers are designed to quickly and easily present focused information to the user. If you require functionality or a map layout that is not available in any pre-made map explorers, you have the option to create your very own map (link on the main VilasGEO page) which can be customized and saved (not required) for later use.
- The custom map is designed to start you off with some of the more common Vilas County layers already loaded and stylized for your use. Simply turn them on or off as needed. You can also rearrange the layers, change symbology, edit labels, create filters, set scale dependencies, and create custom popups. On top of this, you can also add other layers to the map from outside Vilas County. For instance, you could add DNR boat landings, watersheds, or US census blocks to your map from ArcGIS Online. And if you create a free account, you can even upload tabular data to create your own spatial datasets.
- Additional tools are also available in the custom map interface. You can create bookmarks, sketch (points, lines, polygons, text), and print to PDF (this tool being similar to the previous online mapping print tools).
- If you wish to save a custom map, you need to create a free ArcGIS public account (link on main VilasGEO page). To retrieve your saved map you'll need to go to your ArcGIS Online user profile and view your content. Bookmark your new map for easier repeat access. ***Clicking the link to create a custom map on the VilasGEO page **will not** take you to your saved map.

Solution Hubs

These are webpages that group together maps, tools and information on a specific topic for easier retrieval than performing an endless scroll on a single page. Along with those items shown on the main VilasGEO page, you will also find additional maps, tools, links, data, forms and applications depending on the hub.

Unique Hub Items

Here are some of the items that make each solution hub unique:

- **Land Records Hub:** User can retrieve legacy tax bills not present in ALRS back to 2011. Static PDF parcel maps and zoning maps can be downloaded.
- **Addressing Hub:** Download PDF address maps/atlasses and search address changes.
- **Geodata Hub:** Search, visualize and download County GIS data. Search for imagery and/or LiDAR tiles using the embedded finders.
- **Voting Hub:** The Voting Information Explorer is embedded right in the page; download PDF district and ward maps.
- **Recreation Hub:** USNG Explorer app, offline mobile map downloads (in development), and links to custom static (PDF) recreation maps made for various County departments.

Tools and Forms

The tools and forms listed on the main VilasGEO page are also available from their respective hub (match the colors). Each tool will have basic usage instructions within the tool itself, so look out for blocks of text and tooltips. Here is a brief rundown of each of the featured tools:

- **Owner Listing Generator:** This tool allows the user to create an owner listing based on a lake, condo, site address, special tax district, or a shape drawn on the map. Once the filter or selection tool is applied, users can download the resultant listing as a comma-separated values (CSV) file. From this, users can generate a listing (by opening a spreadsheet program and *then* importing the data) or mailing labels (via a mail merge function). The table in the Generator app can be resorted, resized, and columns reordered.
- **Survey Index:** Look up surveys filed with the Vilas County Surveyor's Office by file ID, section, client, surveyor or company. Clicking on a record in the results table allows the user to open the associated scanned survey. The results table can be resorted, resized, and columns reordered. In the upper right of the window users can search field notes or control corners in a similar manner.
- **Custom Work/Data Request** (coming soon): Users will be able to request custom work and/or data from the Land Information Department by completing an interactive logic-based form.
- **Road Name Lookup:** This allows users to find if a road exists within the County and where it is located. This is especially useful for those needing to choose a unique road name for their newly-named road.
- **Sign Installation:** For municipalities to notify the Land Information Department of completed address sign installations.
- **Road Name Request:** For individuals required to name a new road, this is their way to submit their choices for the new road name.
- **Uniform Address Application:** A logic-based form used to apply for a new site address.

Associated Systems

There are many systems that are linked to from VilasGEO, and that offer related information. Such systems are provided here with links, along with additional information to get you started.

Ascent Land Records Suite

Contact: Land Information Department (Real Property Lister) | 715-479-3696 | crmccr@vilascountywi.gov

- Ascent Land Records Suite (ALRS) – <https://ascent.vilascountywi.gov/LandRecords/>

View tax, assessment, property, and owner information, along with links to recent tax bills, permits, LandShark, and VilasGEO.

LandShark

Contact: Register of Deeds | 715-479-3660 | registerofdeeds@vilascountywi.gov

- LandShark – <https://landshark.vilascountywi.gov/LandShark/>

This system provides access to documents recorded in the Register of Deeds office via the internet, including deeds, subdivision and condo plats, and certified surveys. Per State statute, a fee is required to be collected for any document physical copies or online viewings.

Ascent Permit Management

Contact: Zoning & Planning Department | 715-479-3620 | zoning@vilascountywi.gov

- Ascent Permit Management Suite (APM) – <https://ascent.vilascountywi.gov/PermitManagement/>

Records for both sanitary and general zoning permits, along with scanned documents, are available through this system. All new permits are scanned and uploaded within a matter of days, but older permits are only scanned and uploaded back to 1985 in APM, and currently not all of those county-wide have been scanned. Please contact the Zoning & Planning Department if you need any additional information.