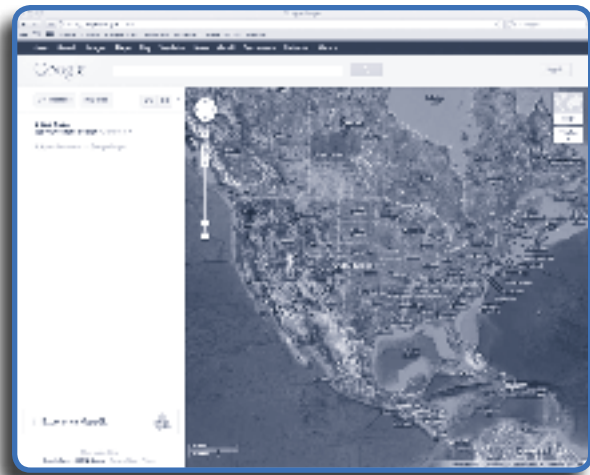# Using Google Maps to Create a Social Map

Using the Google Maps web program makes it easy to create a social map. You will need to have a Google account in order to utilize this program. Google accounts are free and easy to set up. To set up an account, go to www.google.com and click on the "Sign in" button on the upper right hand corner. Follow the directions on the next screen to create your account.

Go to the Google Maps website at www.maps.google.com. Click on the button that says "My Places" and then on the larger "sign in" button. After entering your account name and password, you will be ready to utilize Google Maps.

Google provides detailed on-line instructions for using most features of the Google Maps program. It is recommended that you go through the interactive tutorial your first time through, the link to which can be found under the red button marked "Create Map." If you need assistance while making your map, you can use the "help" function by clicking on the gear in the upper right hand corner of the screen.

To begin making your social map, click on the red button, "Create Map." Using the watershed map found using the DNR Watershed Atlas, focus the Google map on the communities and surrounding areas within the watershed by typing in the name of a community in the blank field at the top of the screen and pressing return/enter.

By opening up two screens in your internet browser, you can toggle between the DNR Watershed Atlas and Google Maps to double check the cities and town boundaries through which the watershed passes. For a watershed that flows through multiple communities, you will want to create a map for each community. Save each map under the name of the watershed and community.
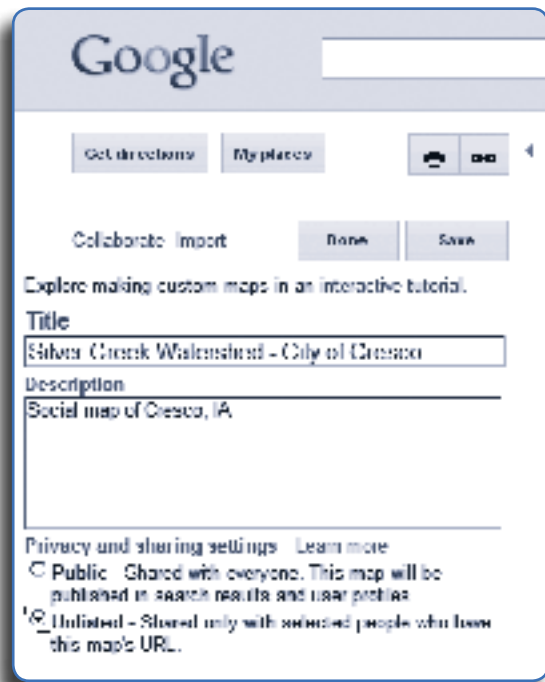
Figure 5-1: When creating a social map, use the "unlisted" setting in Google.

For example, in making the social map of the Silver Creek Watershed that passes through Cresco you would want to save the map as "Silver Creek Watershed–Cresco." You can specify the privacy settings for the map; it is suggested selecting "unlisted" as in figure 5-1.

You can now add potential "hot spots" to the map. Hot spots are local places where people gather, share information, or are heavily trafficked areas that many people in a community will pass through. They are places that can act as information clearinghouses about issues of local interest, such as water quality and watershed protection.

Common hot spots include restaurants, bars and cafes, churches, local government offices, pools, community centers, golf and country clubs, libraries, movie theaters, schools, retail spaces, grain elevators and medical clinics.
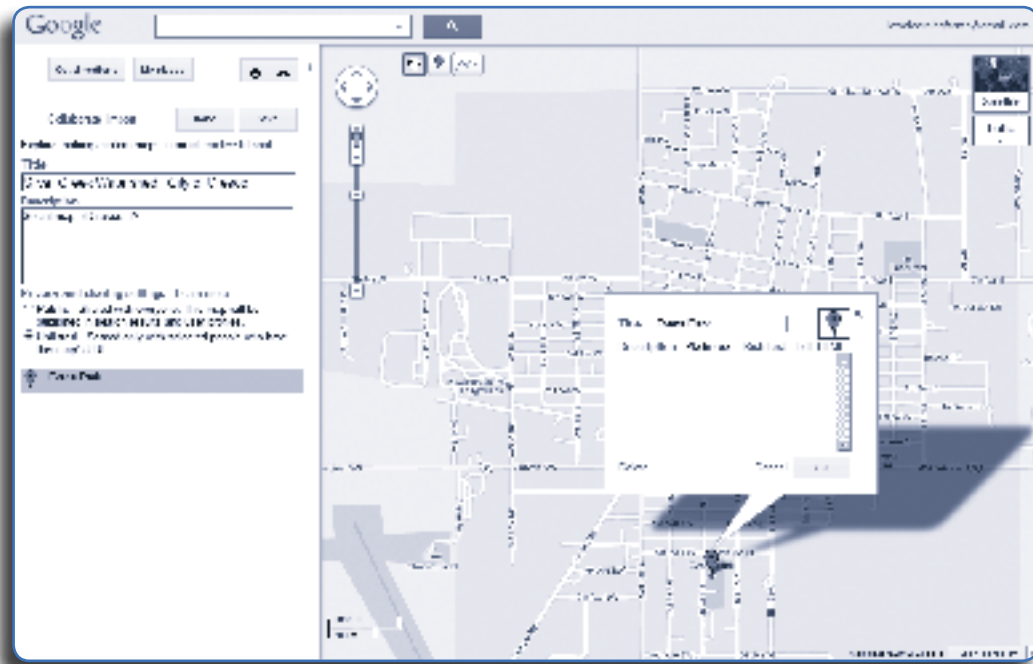
Before visiting the watershed communities, make a list of potential community hot spots by contacting local stakeholders and conducting a general Internet search. Local stakeholders, such as watershed coordinators and Soil and Water Conservation District commissioners, are often very familiar with their communities and can provide you with a list of starting points where community members gather within the watershed.

Likewise, many communities and businesses have an established web presence and can be found by searching key words (church, parks, bike trails, etc.) and the community's name. The local chamber of commerce, Better Business Bureau, tourism board, city and county websites are also excellent places to look for hot spots. Finally, online yellow pages will allow you to search communities by category (churches, restaurants, medical clinics, etc.). Keep a running list of your potential hot spots. You will want to check all of these out when you visit the community and confer with local residents at a later point as to how much these locations truly are places where people gather.

Figure 5-2: You can add place markers on the Google map to mark the local hot spots and add specific details or descriptions for each marker.

Add all of the hot spots you have listed onto the Google map you are creating. To add a place marker for a particular hot spot, type in the name of the location in the blank search field above the map. For instance, if you wanted to add a place marker at the Cresco Public Library, you would type in "Cresco Public Library" and the map would hone in on its location.

Click on "My Places" on the left hand side of the map and then click on the title of the map that you have saved. Likewise, many important community places and retail outlets are already listed on Google Maps. You can zoom in to the right level of detail to see these places written on the map.

To add the place marker, go to the upper left hand corner of the map and click on the marker icon (next to the "pan map" icon, represented by the hand). The cursor will now look like a teardrop shaped marker. Move the cursor to where you want to place it and click on the location. The marker will drop and a small information box will appear. Add the appropriate title for the location and a brief description in the provided fields, as in figure 5-2.
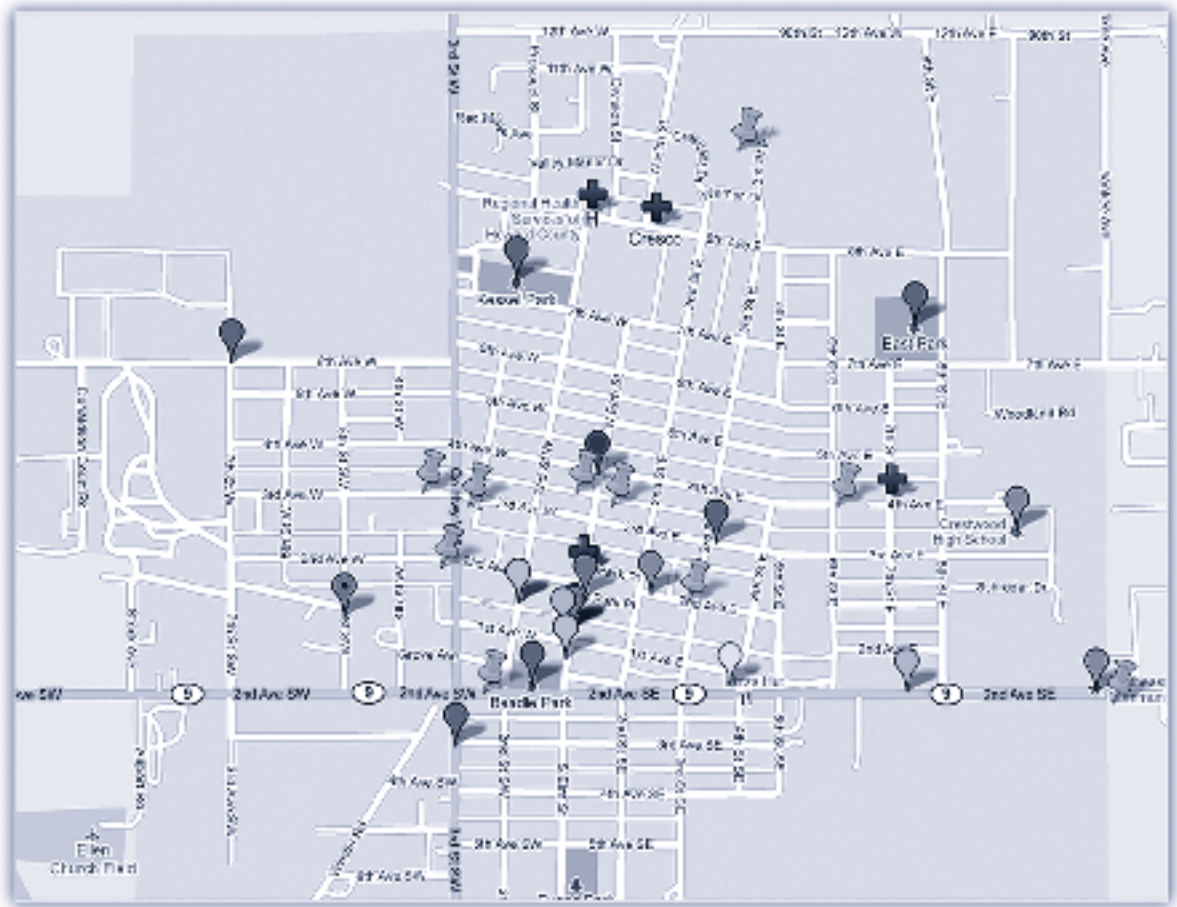
You can also change the marker's color and shape by clicking on the place marker on the right hand side of the information box. **Creating a key to mark**

similar hot spots with the same marker is recommended. For example, all parks receive a green marker, while restaurants receive an orange marker. Use broad categories such as: restaurants and bars, churches, schools, medical clinics, gas stations, recreational areas, government offices, etc.

When you have finished filling out all the information for a particular hot spot, click on "OK" in the bottom right hand corner. Remember to save your map as you go along, periodically clicking "Save" on the left hand side of the map. An example map is shown on pages 5-5 and 5-6.

After visiting the watershed you may need to make changes to your Google map. Log in and select the appropriate watershed map. Add place markers and details for the newly identified hot spots. Delete place markers from locations that were not popular social gathering places. To delete, click on it with the cursor and click "delete" in the bottom left corner of the box that pops up. Save and select "done" when you have finished updating the map. You will want to create a directory for the hot spots on your social map. Create a Word document with the names, addresses and marker code for each of the spots.

Sample Social Map: Silver Creek Watershed, Cresco, IA

	Teluwut Grill House & Pub 104 N Elm St Cresco, IA 52136		Mabe's Pizza
	Sue-Z-Q's Family Dining		Dough & Joe 114 N Elm St Cresco, IA 52136
	Fareway 112 S Elm St Cresco, IA 52136		Kwik Star 330 2nd Ave SE Cresco, IA 52136
	M & M Lounge 109 S Park Place Cresco, IA 52136		Laundromat 114 2nd St SW Cresco, IA 52136
	Kleve's Pub 110 N Elm St Cresco, IA 52136		Winneshiek Cooperation 120 5th St SW Cresco, IA 52136
	Cresco Lanes 308 3rd St SW Cresco, IA 52136		Cresco Fitness Center 316 3rd Ave E Cresco, IA 52136
	Cresco County Club 22006 115th St Cresco, IA 52136		Prairie's Edge Nature Center/Turkey River Campground 11562 Valley Ave Cresco IA 52136
	Cresco Public library 320 N Elm St Cresco, IA 52136		Crestwood Junior High School Cresco, IA 52136
	Notre Dame Elementary School 221 2nd Ave E Cresco, IA 52136		Northeast Iowa Community Clg 1020 2nd Ave SE Cresco, IA 52136
✚	Cresco Medical Clinic 235 8th Ave W Cresco, IA 52136	✚	Cresco Chiropractic Clinic 407 7th St SW Cresco, IA 52136
✚	Cresco Family Dentistry 210 N Elm St Cresco, IA 52136	✚	Oak Creek Dental 1155 Canterbury St Cresco, IA 52136
✚	Cresco Family Optometry 213 N Elm St Cresco, IA 52136		Cresco Farmer's Market 112 2nd St SW Cresco, IA 52136
	First Congressional Church 100 3rd Ave E Cresco, IA 52136		Cresco United Methodist Church 310 N Elm St Cresco, IA 52136
	Assembly of God Church 617 4th Ave W Cresco, IA 52136		Immanuel Lutheran Church 805 2nd Ave W Cresco, IA 52136
	Cresco Community Chapel 24024 HWY 9 Cresco, IA 52136		First Lutheran Church 920 3rd St E Cresco, IA 52136
	St Bridget's Catholic Church 116 3rd St E Cresco, IA 52136		Assumption Church Cresco, IA 52136
	Church of Christ Cresco, IA 52136		Notre Dame Church Hall 229 2nd Ave SW Cresco, IA 52136
	East Park Cresco, IA 52136		Kessel Park Cresco, IA 52136
	Beadle Park Cresco, IA 52136		Howard County Fairgrounds 0th Ave W Cresco, IA 52136