

How to use the mapping tool

When you enlarge and start exploring the mapping tool by clicking on the link you will see the Blue River Watershed, its subwatersheds and the rivers and streams of this area. Increasing the health of this watershed, including all its neighborhoods, is the mission of Heartland Conservation Alliance.

Tip #1: On the left side of the map, you will see a checkmark in the box of the Blue River Watershed and Floodplain heading. This is the first of ten layers of information. You can choose to see each layer of information individually by clicking the checkmark off and checking the next one down, or you can choose to see them turned on together by clicking several checkmarks.

Tip #2: To find an area on the map that is important to you, you can either use the “+” and “-” buttons to zoom in, or you can use the search function (by clicking on the magnifying glass icon) to type in an address, landmark, or neighborhood name.

Tip #3: Trails and Bikeways are helpful to view zoomed out so that you can see the whole network and determine if your area of interest is connected or if there is an opportunity for a new connection.

Tip #4: The Blue River Action Plan – Action Areas, and the Renew the Blue Active Projects show where partners are already working on projects together.

Tip #5: As you zoom in to an area of interest, the Land Bank Vacant Lots and Vacant Lots Scored layers show parcels that do not have structures on them. Land Bank Lots are owned by the City, and individuals or neighborhoods may apply to purchase them at a low cost.

Tip #6: To learn more about individual parcels, click on the parcel and see the information that now pops up in the left hand column. If you would like to see an image and the legal description of the land, click on the link to the County site under the heading “PropertyRe.” This will open a new window in your browser so that you can come right back to the map in the original window.

Tip #7: As you are looking through the layers of information, bear in mind that the layers at the top of the list “cover” the layers you have turned on lower in the list. So, you will have to turn off the “Watershed” layer to click on the parcels in the vacant lot layers.

Tip #8: The “Vacant Adjacent Lots Larger than .7 Acres” is helpful to see where you could assemble multiple parcels for larger community benefit, but to access the individual parcel data in “Vacant Lots Scored” you must uncheck the “Vacant Adjacent Lots Larger than .7 Acres” layer.

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Tip #9: You will notice that the vacant lots are color coded by a numbered score. The higher the score, (and the closer to red in the rainbow spectrum) the more environmentally sensitive the parcel. These scores come from adding up the following factors:

- Floodplain 0-2
- Ecological value 0-7
- Farmland soils 0-1
- Land Bank 0-1
- Food deserts 0-1
- Poverty 0-3 (block group % below)
- Park deserts 0-1 (.5 mile buffer)
- Slope 0-3
- Proximity to stream 0-3

You can see how each parcel scores in these categories by clicking the parcel and scrolling down through the information in the left hand column.