

# GIS Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is a geographic information system (GIS)?**
  - A Geographic Information System (GIS) refers to collection of geospatial capabilities and tools, i.e., interactive reference mapping and spatial (map-based) analysis, and all data, applications, services and architecture that support them
- **Why is GIS useful?**
  - A GIS is an invaluable tool for storing, organizing, analyzing, and viewing data. It has been estimated that 80% of decisions made by local government are impacted, influenced, or constricted by geographical components.
  - Simply put, leveraging GIS as a tool in decision making provides Carbon County with the ability to analyze information geographically, resulting in more informed decisions, increased productivity, cost-effectiveness, and dissemination of knowledge for numerous county projects and entities.
- **What constitutes GIS data?**
  - The term "GIS data" broadly encompasses any and all data which has been incorporated into a geographic information system (GIS). In order to be incorporated into a GIS, data must have (or be able to be linked to) an associated spatial component which ties the data to a specific location in space. Examples of data which could be incorporated into a GIS include:
    - aerial photography
    - local parks
    - flood water inundation during a hurricane
    - emergency service logs
- **How do I view Carbon County GIS data?**
  - Carbon County offers several GIS layers up for public viewing through various GIS web mapping services located on our: [Carbon County Geographical Information System \(Interactive Mapping System\)](#)
  - For GIS data obtained from Carbon County, you must have a GIS software package compatible with the data filetypes to view them. Carbon County uses and recommends the use of ESRI ArcGIS products for viewing our GIS data. A free ESRI ArcGIS viewer (ArcExplorer for Desktop) can be downloaded directly from their site.
- **How do I obtain Carbon County GIS data?**
  - The method of obtaining Carbon County's GIS data is by request.
    - Personal & Business Use - Carbon County offers their GIS data for purchase [following the official [Carbon County Geospatial Data Fee Schedule](#)] for any and all personal and business uses. To obtain the data under the personal & business uses, you or a supervisor must sign the 'Geospatial Data Delivered Content Terms and Conditions of Use' as a representative of your organization with the authority to enter into such contracts.
    - Academic & Educational Use - Carbon County offers their GIS data gratis [free of charge] for any and all academic & educational uses as assigned, supervised, or collaborated with an academic institution and/or its employees. To obtain the data under the academic & educational uses, your academic advisor must first

sign the 'Geospatial Data Terms & Conditions of Use' as a representative of their academic institution and as a supervisor to those whom are performing the may be collaborating in the research. Alternatively, if requests are expected to be frequent, it might be prudent to have their academic institution (if eligible as a non-profit) enter into a 'Geospatial Data Share Agreement' with Franklin County (elaborated upon in #3). Carbon County has an understanding of reciprocity. When asking for data gratis, there is an expectation of reciprocal data, end-product resultant data, research data, or other associated GIS data.

- Government & Non-Profit Use - Carbon County offers their GIS data gratis [free of charge] for any and all government & non-profit uses in the normal chain of command. To obtain the data under the governmental and non-profit use, your organization must first enter into the 'Geospatial Data Share Agreement' with Carbon County which outlines the terms and conditions of sharing GIS data between the two organizations. Proof of government or registered non-profit status must be provided with the initial data request.
- To obtain GIS data through any of these avenues, you are required to submit an official 'Geospatial Data Request Form' along with the aforementioned required forms to the Carbon County GIS Department at [GIS Data Request](#). If requesting a 'Geospatial Data Share Agreement', please send in the 'Geospatial Data Request Form and indicate you are seeking a 'Geospatial Data Share Agreement' on the form. Once received, the assigned GIS staff will process your request within 5 business days. The official [CCGIS Data Request Agreement](#) can be accessed here: Geospatial Data Request Form
- **What filetype is the GIS data delivered to me as?**
  - All delivered GIS data will be provided in ESRI ArcGIS software compatible shapefiles compressed into a .zip folder. The shapefile package may consist of all or some of the following filetypes:
    - Feature Geodatabases (ESRI)
    - Shapefiles
    - CAD Files
    - Excel
  - Furthermore, all delivered imagery files will be provided in inherent GIS software compatible filetypes compressed into a .zip folder.