



# base line

*a newsletter of the*

**Map and Geospatial Information Round Table**

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<http://www.ala.org/rt/magirt>

**Volume 43, Number 6  
December 2022**



**base line** is an official publication of the American Library Association's Map and Geospatial Information Round Table (MAGIRT). The purpose of base line is to provide current information on cartographic materials, other publications of interest to map and geography librarians, meetings, related governmental activities, and map librarianship. It is a medium of communication for members of MAGIRT and information of interest is welcome. The opinions expressed by contributors are their own and do not necessarily represent those of the American Library Association and MAGIRT. Contributions should be sent to the appropriate editor listed below.

**Editor:** John A. Olson  
Government and Geo-Information Librarian  
Syracuse University  
E-mail: [jaolson@syr.edu](mailto:jaolson@syr.edu)

**Distribution Manager:** Mike Smith  
Subject Specialist for Maps, California Gov Info, GIS  
Coordinator, UCSD  
E-mail: [mls003@ucsd.edu](mailto:mls003@ucsd.edu)

**Cataloging Editor:** Tammy T. Wong  
Senior Cataloging Specialist  
Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress  
E-mail: [twon@loc.gov](mailto:twon@loc.gov)

**New Maps and Books Editor:** Kim Plassche  
Sciences Librarian, Liaison to Geography & GIS  
University at Buffalo  
E-mail: [kf43@buffalo.edu](mailto:kf43@buffalo.edu)

**Membership and Marketing Committee Chairperson:**  
**Erin Cheever**  
E-mail: [erin.cheever@gmail.com](mailto:erin.cheever@gmail.com)

**Advertising Rates:** For one issue: full page \$100; half page \$50; quarter page \$25. Opposite "Great Moments in Map Librarianship": full page \$150; half page \$80; quarter page \$40.

Send graphics as an .AI, .PDF, .JPG, or .GIF file and 300 dpi or better. Send text documents in: Cambria 12 point. Send files as an email attachment to the editor. Submissions may be edited and re-formatted to the extent necessary to fit the size and space allotted for each issue. Final full-page size is 8 x 10 inches. Contact the MAGIRT Treasurer for invoicing and payment methods. Advertisements must be paid in full before they are placed in the upcoming issue.

**base line** is published electronically six times a year: in February, April, June, August, October, and December. All older issues of base line are now freely available on the MAGIRT website.

Members of MAGIRT can access **base line** as a benefit of their membership.

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#### MAGIRT OFFICERS:

**Chairperson:**  
Kevin Dyke  
Maps and Spatial Data Curator  
Oklahoma State University  
Email: [kdyke@okstate.edu](mailto:kdyke@okstate.edu)

**Vice-Chairperson (Chair-Elect):**  
Tim Kiser  
**Catalog Librarian for Cartographic Resources**  
**Michigan State University**  
E-mail: [tkiser@msu.edu](mailto:tkiser@msu.edu)

**Secretary:**  
Laura Kane McElfresh  
Cartographic Metadata Librarian  
University of Minnesota  
E-mail: [mcelf008@umn.edu](mailto:mcelf008@umn.edu)

**Treasurer:**  
Iris Taylor  
Senior Cataloging Specialist  
Geography and Map Division, Library of Congress  
E-mail: [itaylor@loc.gov](mailto:itaylor@loc.gov)

**Assistant Treasurer:**

**Past Chairperson:**  
Min Zhang  
Head, Metadata and Stewardship Section  
Geography & Map Division  
Library of Congress  
E-mail: [mizh@loc.gov](mailto:mizh@loc.gov)

<http://www.ala.org/rt/magirt>

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312.944.6780

Published by the Map and Geospatial Information Round Table



## FROM THE CHAIR

KEVIN DYKE

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY

My fellow MAGIRTians, we have successfully reached the finale of 2022. As I write this column, high velocity fans and dehumidifiers surround me in the aftermath of a storm induced water leak. We fortunately avoided any damage to the map collection, but the whole experience is an always useful reminder about the importance of the work we do. Although we are theoretically aware of the importance of preserving our collections, in my case at least it took a near disaster to truly drive the point home. Nearly all of us have items in our collections that would represent a tremendous blow if lost.



As geospatial information library professionals, our network of personnel and collections, each node having its own particular sphere of focus, combine together to create something even more robust and resilient. At the very least we can rely upon each other for advice, while in the case of true disasters, colleagues can offer more concrete support. My hope is that whenever possible, MAGIRT should help in recovery efforts across our member institutions. Thinking charitably towards one another is always important, but especially so during this time of year. With those words in mind, I wish everyone in MAGIRT a happy holiday season.

As always, if you have anything you would like me to address or include in my chair's column, or if you would just like to get in touch, don't hesitate to contact me at [kdyke@okstate.edu](mailto:kdyke@okstate.edu). Thank you and see you next time!



# MAGIRT Executive Board Meeting

October 25, 2022

**Time:** October 25, 3:00 PM Eastern Time via [Zoom](#)

**Present:** Erin Cheever, Kevin Dyke, Craig Haggit, Tim Kiser, Laura McElfresh, Wangyal Shawa, Amy Swanson, Min Zhang

**Regrets:** Kim Plassche

## 1. Call to order - 3:06 pm Eastern

## 2. Call for changes to Agenda

- a. none

## 3. Secretary--[Minutes from past meeting](#) (Laura)

- a. Our most recent meeting was in June at ALA Annual; minutes were approved via email & [published](#) in *base line* 42:3 (August 2022)

## 4. Officer Reports

### a. Chair (Kevin)

1. Bylaws revisions postponed until after new ALA bylaws are adopted. The new ALA bylaws will be up for adoption on the spring 2023 ballot. Anticipated date for round table bylaws to be on the ballot is spring 2024. Thanks to Sierra's efforts, we're well on our way.
2. John Olson will be passing the *base line* torch at the end of 2023. The sooner we start searching for a new editor, the better. This also provides an opportunity to think holistically about *base line* & any new directions we want to pursue with the publication.
  - a) Big thanks to John for what will be 10 years in the role!
3. Tour of the Newberry Library for ALA (Friday of the conference weekend). Hope to be able to meet with new Curator; we'll get to see renovations. This will be the first MAGIRT tour of the Newberry since at least the mid-2010s!
4. Submitted panel titled "Revealing Chicago's Planning Past Digitally: Chicago Government Information Transformed for Access" (on grant-supported digitization/conversion project; cosponsoring with GODORT)

Abstract: "The government of Chicago has historically produced a tremendous amount of information about the geography and planning of the city, but much of it is only accessible in physical form in select locations. But several projects seek to transform that, making this information available to researchers around the world. This program brings together panelists working on projects that transform print and microform materials into geospatial information available to researchers and explores the opportunities and challenges of this sort of project."

**b. Vice Chair (Tim)**

1. Not much of an update! Was going to propose a Newberry tour for ALA; apparently did that through the power of his mind :-)
2. Tim would like to update the MAGIRT officers' calendar! Laura will make sure he has proper access

**c. Secretary (Laura)**

1. No specific Secretary update. On a personal note, Laura gets to go to DC to give a talk at the LC "Explore Geography and Map Division" event on Thursday!

**d. Webmaster (Craig)**

1. Memorial video - at top of Awards section of website sounds good.
2. *base line* is up on website
3. Further info under New Business

**e. Treasurer (Iris)**

1. (none)

**f. Past Chair (Min)**

1. Still have two Board vacancies to fill: Publications Chair & OPOC Chair
  - a) Craig: At ALA Annual we had been talking about what these committees do, and how they relate to each other; possibility of combining? Bylaws are somewhat vague about this.
  - b) "Publishing" includes *base line*, and used to include other print publications that are no longer being produced; but could also be construed to include social media & other online resources.
2. Still have time to nominate for MAGIRT Honors Award; nominations due end of December; Min will send out information
3. All officer candidates need to enter their bios in the election website
  - a) Secretary, Chair, and Treasurer are up for election. (Laura & Iris have both volunteered to remain as Secretary & Treasurer)

**5. Old Business**

- a. none; other than OPOC/Publications discussion, which we will keep going. Would like to have this resolved before Annual, especially as it will inform future *base line* matters.

**6. New Business**

- a. Report on website update (Craig/Erin)
  1. ALA's current Drupal iteration has no sandbox for developing a website and then bringing it live all at once. All they can do is get content available in

preparation for that. Craig & Erin have been working on the content & hope to be able to migrate it with as little downtime as possible.

2. Content management piece: the survey indicated we need more info on the “Get Involved” page. Erin will reach out on ALA Connect to gather information.
3. Have an agile project management approach to the website.
- b. December 27th MAGIRT Board meeting: reschedule or cancel? (Laura)
  1. Kevin suggests rescheduling for mid-January, when people are returning for the start of the new semester.
  2. Laura will put out a poll for scheduling a mid-January meeting instead of December. (February, we will make a decision closer to the actual date, depending on what business arises after the January meeting.)
- c. AAG (American Association of Geographers) is [meeting in Denver](#) in March 2023. The Denver Public Library has a Mapping Prejudice project for Denver; one of the panel leaders has expressed interest in having DPL talk about it at the meeting.

## **7. Committee/DG/IG Reports**

### **a. Bylaws & Governing Documents/Nominations & Awards Committee (Min)**

1. Min will send out information on nominations (see Past Chair report).

### **b. Cataloging & Classification Committee (Tim)**

1. It was noted on the OLAC list that the instructions in old RDA 2.3.4.5 are not present in new RDA. In practice, this has been the basis upon which we supply bracketed location information in MARC field 245 when it is not present or inadequate for identification of the coverage area of a map, for instance: *Election districts : [Lansing, Michigan]*. Paige Andrew and I have advocated having them either restored or accommodated in a policy statement (I suspect the latter is the more likely outcome).
2. A URL error was reported in our best practices cataloging document. Tim will send a corrected PDF to Craig, & Craig will get the document replaced.

### **c. Education Committee (Kim)**

1. We have a webinar scheduled for November 30th 1pm-3pm EST: “Image Analysis in the Cloud: Introducing ArcGIS Image” presented by Angela Lee and Canserina Kurnia (Esri). This is a joint collaboration between WAML, MAGIRT and Esri. Information has been shared on ALA Connect, WAML, and in the October *base line*. The workshop is hosted on the Esri account; there are currently 19 people [registered](#) (the cap is 30).
2. Kim has been writing the “New Maps and Cartographic Materials” column for *base line* for just about three years. Due to changing responsibilities at her institution, it is time for another member to contribute their reviews. Please contact John Olson if you are interested in writing the column beginning with the February 2023 issue – more information in [the October base line](#). Please also reach out to Kim with any questions!

**d. Geographic Technologies (GeoTech)/GODORT GIS DG (Wangyal)**

1. (none)

**e. Membership & Marketing Committee (Erin)**

1. Erin will be sending information about MAGIRT and about map & geospatial librarianship out to library schools.
2. Perhaps also put together a webinar (collaborate with Education Committee?) on careers in map librarianship. (Kevin & Laura are available but if other people want a chance to be on the panel, we'll gladly defer.)
3. Last year we had 5 students join -- would like to match or exceed that! We're working on how to engage the students better.

**f. Online Presence Oversight Committee (VACANT)**

1. (none)

**g. Publications Committee (VACANT)**

1. (none)

**h. Cataloging of Cartographic Resources IG (Amy)**

1. The IG is following the work of the PCC Task Group that is testing the new RDA Toolkit; they are thinking about what they (and MAGIRT in general) can do in the future regarding education around the new Toolkit.
2. Tim adds: PCC pushed back their official adoption date until next June (2023) at the earliest. This is not the first such revision and might not be the last.
3. Craig: At ALA, Tim &/or Paige mentioned putting a group together to look at this? Further discussion recalls that MAGIRT is waiting for PCC to take the lead; we do not want to reinvent any wheels.

**i. Map Collection Management DG (Craig)**

1. (none)

**j. Freedom to Read Foundation (Iris)**

1. (none)

**k. WAML liaison report (Kathy)**

1. (none)

**l. CC:DA Report (Min)**

1. New CC:DA Chair is Amanda Sprochi, Cataloger/Librarian IV at the University of Missouri University Libraries

Next meeting: Tuesday, January 31, 2023

Adjournment: 3:53 pm Eastern





## MAGIRT Honors Award

We are accepting nominations for the 2023 MAGIRT Honors Award.

This award is presented to a person or an organization in recognition of outstanding achievement and major contributions to map and geospatial librarianship and to the Round Table.

Please submit the nomination to [mizh@loc.gov](mailto:mizh@loc.gov) with the following information:

1. Name of Nominee or Organization, plus mailing address, phone number, and email address.
2. Position Title (or Former Position Title) of an individual.
3. A brief statement (one or two paragraphs) that explains why this individual or organization should receive the MAGIRT Honors Award.

The award recipient will be announced and honored during the MAGIRT Awards Reception at the 2023 American Library Association Annual Conference in Chicago. The recipient need not be present at the conference to be chosen, though we do all enjoy the opportunity to raise our glasses to the Honored. The recipient receives a certificate, a trophy or similar item, and a cash award. Remarks made at the awards reception and pictures of the recipients are published in *base line*.

The winner will be selected by the MAGIRT Nominations and Awards Committee (Which is comprised of the MAGIRT Past Chair, Chair, and Vice Chair). Here is a list of our [past winners](#).

Please send your nominations by January 31, 2023.

We look forward to your nominations!

Min Zhang  
MAGIRT Past Chair and Chair of the Nominations Committee





## *From the Editor's Keyboard*



## COLUMNIST WANTED!

We have an opening for someone who would like to write the **New Maps and Cartographic Materials** column. The current columnist, Kim Plassche, can no longer contribute her in-depth reviews for the column.

If you enjoy finding and exploring new atlases, maps, GIS data and map websites and also enjoy writing, why not combine the two together and write about them.

This is a wonderful opportunity to make an impactful contribution to our part of the library profession. I would like to encourage any MAGIRT member who is interested and wishes to continue this important column in *base line* to contact the Editor for more information or if you are interested in writing this column. It also looks great in that tenure or promotion portfolio.



# MAGIRT NEEDS YOU!

## Wanted: Editor

MAGIRT is seeking a person to become the new Editor of *base line*.

My role as the current Editor of *base line* will continue until the 2023 December issue. This will make ten years that I have been shepherding this publication out to the membership and I feel that is long enough for one person to be in this role. So it is time to pass the Editor's torch on to another MAGIRT member who can take *base line* to the next level.

Being Editor has been a very satisfying challenge and experience for me and I have made some wonderful contacts and friends during this time while communicating out news and information to the MAGIRT membership. So it's been a good run for me and it's time to turn it over to someone else. It has been a privilege and honor to serve in this capacity to the membership and to help promote our corner of the library profession.

If you are interest in this position, feel free to contact me, John Olson [jaolson@sy.edu](mailto:jaolson@sy.edu) if you want to know more about this important role MAGIRT has to offer.



east view presents

# Maxar Vivid Imagery Basemaps

**East View is proud to be an authorized Maxar reseller.** As a leading space technology and intelligence company, Maxar's Vivid imagery basemap features their latest innovations in mosaicking, color balancing and image processing to provide stunning high-resolution, high-accuracy image layers.

Vivid offers a suite of imagery basemaps with up to 30 cm resolution and 5 m CE90 spatial accuracy. Vivid basemaps are available off the shelf with flexible access options for a solution that integrates seamlessly into your workflow. Vivid products are produced annually with the most current, clear imagery available. With high-quality image layers available immediately around the globe, Vivid is ideal for visualization, large area feature extraction, and providing context in maps and applications.

## FEATURES AND SPECIFICATIONS

**With multiple off-the-shelf basemap options – Basic, Standard and Advanced – Vivid provides high-quality image layers for a wide variety of applications, from city to global scale.**

- All products are color-balanced ortho-rectified imagery mosaics.
- Vivid Basic and Standard can be resampled to lower resolutions, from 1 m to 15 m.
- Annual basemap builds incorporate the latest image collections for a basemap that reflects reality.

**Delivery Formats:** Imagery basemap format options include cloud-optimized GeoTIFF (COG, includes JPEG compression) and Maxar tile cache. When formatted as a tile cache, basemaps can be bundled with other basemaps.

**Product files and metadata:** Imagery basemap deliveries include the raster tiles, tile metadata and source image metadata (collection date, sensor, ONA, etc).

**Access:** Imagery basemap access options include Amazon S3 and FTP. Vivid imagery basemaps are also available in SecureWatch, using the web portal or streaming with web service APIs.



► Contact [geospatial@eastview.com](mailto:geospatial@eastview.com) for more information about Maxar Vivid imagery basemaps



[geospatial@eastview.com](mailto:geospatial@eastview.com)

tel. +1.952.252.1205

fax +1.952.252.1202

[geospatial.com](http://geospatial.com)

# ON THE CATALOGING/CATALOGUING FRONT

TAMMY WONG

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

## Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps for Genealogy

The Sanborn Insurance map collection was a subject of interest in the Genealogy Gems YouTube channel and podcast. Reference Specialist Julie Stoner was interviewed in the Gems Podcast episode and video segment called [Sanborn Insurance Maps at Library of Congress](#) by Lisa Louise Cooke. In the podcast, Julie explains the online resources featured in the [Fire Insurance Maps at the Library of Congress: A Resource Guide](#), covering the strategies for searching the Library's website for maps, free download of Sanborn maps, and highlighting how the GIS project [Sanborn Atlas Volume Finder](#) works. Volume Finders help users pinpoint which Sanborn Fire Insurance Atlas Volume(s) provide coverage for specific geographic areas of interest, including finding an address. The cities covered include Washington, D.C., New York City, Detroit, Chicago, San Francisco, and Los Angeles.

The full, recorded interview and transcript are available [here](#).



[Sanborn Atlas Volume Finder](#)



Other virtual resource on Sanborn maps:

[Geography & Map Division Virtual Orientation: Fire Insurance Maps](#)

This virtual orientation (with [transcript](#)) provides an introduction to the fire insurance maps housed at the Library of Congress by Reference Specialists Amelia Raines and Julie Stoner, with a special focus on the maps created by the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company.

FILM, VIDEO

## Geography & Map Division Virtual Orientation: Fire Insurance Maps

**LIBRARY**  
LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

August 9, 2020  
Raines, Amelia

### Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps

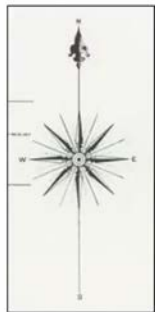
at the Library of Congress

**Agenda:**

- I. Introduction to Fire Insurance Maps
- II. Research with Fire Insurance Maps
- III. Q&A

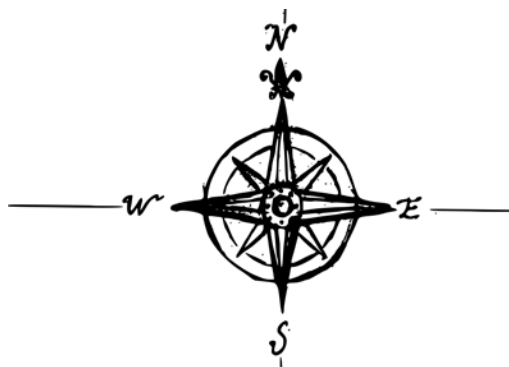
Please put your questions in the Q&A feature, or hold them until the end

Bigger questions? Contact us at <https://ask.loc.gov/map-geography>



00:00 01:00:15 CC BY-NC-SA

[Geography & Map Division Virtual Orientation: Fire Insurance Maps](#)



# NEW MAPS AND CARTOGRAPHIC MATERIALS

Kim Plassche

UNIVERSITY OF BUFFALO

*"Alice had not the slightest idea what Latitude was, or Longitude either, but she thought they were nice grand words to say."*

- Lewis Carrol, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (1865)

## Introduction

I submitted my first column for *base line* in February 2020, which is right before everything changed. Over the past three years, I've navigated the nuances of reviewing atlases on e-readers, computer screens, and if I was lucky, print volumes. I sat on my couch balancing a huge World War II atlas on one leg while holding my similarly sized daughter on the other, hoping daycares would open soon. Gradually campuses opened back up, print ordering resumed, and the world started to look more normal. As authors of new atlases and books reviewed for this column began reflecting on the pandemic, it seemed like maybe it was all behind us.

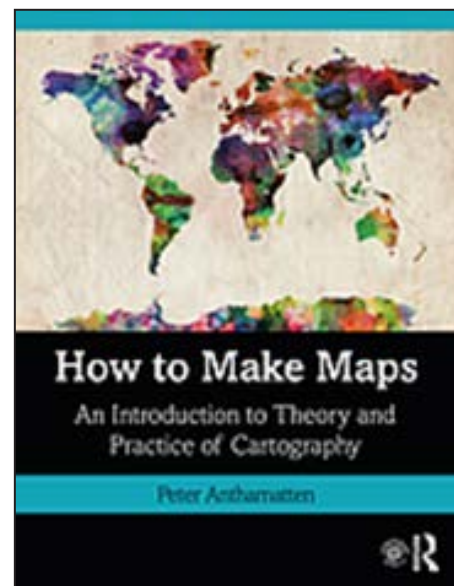
This will be my last column for *base line*. As the world changed during the pandemic, so too did my job responsibilities and priorities. Writing this column has been incredibly fulfilling. I loved the excuse to delve deeper into books I was purchasing for my library. To paraphrase long-time columnist David Bertuca, "Why not write the column? You're looking at these things for collection management, anyway."

I urge all members to consider contributing to *base line* and pick up the column. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with any questions, but I am sure you will be in good hands with our fearless editor, John Olson.

## Books

Anthamatten, Peter. ***How to Make Maps: An Introduction to Theory and Practice of Cartography***. Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2021 (ISBN: 9781138067790). 276 pages: illustrations (chiefly color), maps (chiefly color). List price: \$44.95.

A few years ago, a GIS instructor at my university lamented that students didn't receive education in basic cartography concepts, and many more faculty members on campus have since turned to the campus' map librarian to provide instruction on elements of map design and layout. There is only so



much you can cover in a one-shot one-hour lecture, and students are often asked to review recent publications such as Gretchen Peterson's *GIS Cartography: A Guide to Effective Map Design*, now in its third edition (9781000225914). The field of GIS and indeed cartography changes rapidly, and referring to varying perspectives over time has clear benefits. *How to Make Maps* by Peter Anthamatten is a new book that should also be a top recommendation for those students that did miss out on an introduction to mapmaking, and even those that are currently working in the field. I expect to see this book appearing as assigned text in geography courses – if it isn't that will certainly be a shame. It provides a wonderfully thorough crash course in mapmaking, with descriptive graphics and helpful appendices. It doesn't replace previous books on the topic of cartography but can help fill in gaps and contextualize theories laid out in those other books.

Peter Anthamatten is an Associate Professor in the Department of Geography & Environmental Sciences at University of Colorado Denver. He has taught introductory courses to mapping and GIS, as well as classes specifically related to the applications of GIS in health sciences. He has written extensively on uses of GIS, specifically in publications focused on the geography of health. His teaching and research background have prepared him to write a book he may be able to assign his own students. His expertise is clear in the organization of the chapters and the content relayed.

*How to Make Maps* is divided into twelve chapters: Introduction – Mapping concepts – The language of maps – Cartographic design – Coordinate systems and projections – Text and typography – Color in cartography – 3D, animated, and web cartography – Scholarly research in cartography – Data in mapping – GIS and graphics software – Examples from the field. Four appendices include a map gallery, spatial data sources, eleven guidelines critical for map construction and criticism, and a list of professional cartographic societies (I must note that MAGIRT – sadly – does not appear). Throughout the book, key vocabulary and concepts appear in bolded text, indicating they are defined in the glossary at the end of the book.

Thinking back to my conversation with the GIS teacher regarding the lack of basic cartography skills mastered by his students, a detailed look at the chapters devoted to GIS is needed. Chapter 10 explores the world of data in mapping and covers important concepts such as the file types and directories used in GIS, map digitization and data certainty. Chapter 11 delves into GIS and graphics software concepts and techniques. Although the two chapters span merely 26 pages including references, Anthamatten provides a sufficient overview of these concepts for beginner cartography and GIS students.

This book is a must have for future (and maybe even current) GIS practitioners and anybody working with GIS data. It absolutely deserves a spot on a library shelf dedicated to supporting patrons falling into these general areas.



## Web Resources

### FRED Maps Rise and GeoFRED Set

<https://news.research.stlouisfed.org/2022/06/fred-maps-rise-as-geofred-sets/>

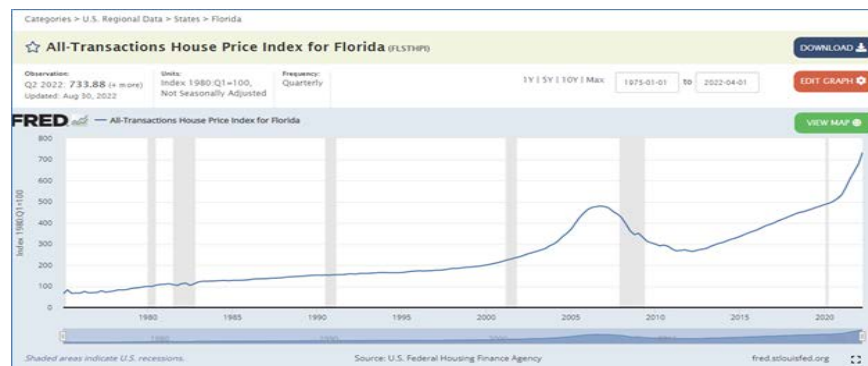
### New FRED Maps

<https://fredaccount.stlouisfed.org/public/dashboard/83217>

For several years, one of my go-to resources for quick mapping and data collection was GeoFRED. The website, managed by the Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, was a useful tool for novice mapmakers using a variety of unique financial and economic data. I was always delighted to show new students and faculty the tool. Our libraries have access to Social Explorer, and I always saw similarities between the two databases. Teaching both in the same session gave users more options with different datasets. Therefore I was dismayed when I saw that FRED was closing down GeoFRED in September 2022 and planned to integrate mapping into FRED through a new endeavor branded FRED maps. Of course, as luck would have it, I realized this change was occurring just weeks before it happened and days before a new class was due to learn about it.

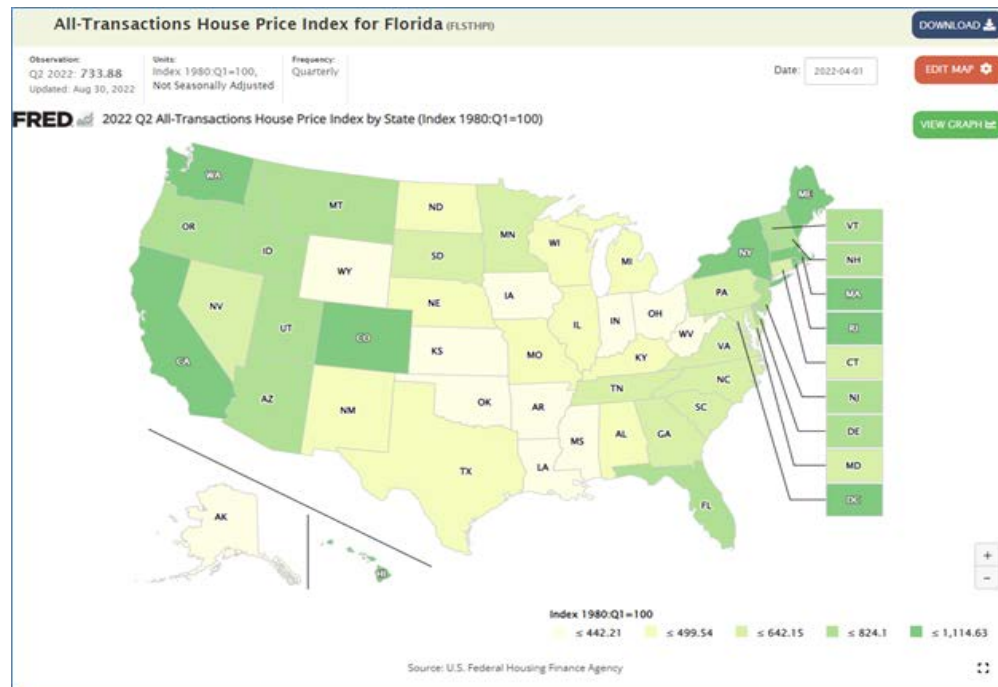
Always an optimist and eager to explore new mapping tools, I dove into the new FRED maps. I missed the standalone mapping platform, but this couldn't be too bad, right? Well, unfortunately, integrating the two has resulted in me no longer recommending it for mapping purposes.

FRED describes its new format as way to “compare regions on a map while complementing and expanding the data analysis you get on a time-series graph.” This data analysis will be valuable for many researchers. However, by adding this extra element, so much is taken away from the mapping.



As the help pages on the website detail, finding a map in FRED is easy. First, find a data series with geographic characteristics. Then, “simply” click the View Map button that appears adjacent to the graph. Easy? No. The trick is finding a dataset that has an associated map. FRED has a large amount of data and graphs, so users may have a lot of clicks to get to a map. For example, if a person is searching for House Price Index information, they may

first click on the dataset titled “All-Transactions House Price Index for the United States.” It certainly seems to fit the requirement for a “geographic characteristic”. This isn’t the case. No map option appears. It isn’t until the data is broken down by state that the map appears. The map includes all states, so the fact that mapping isn’t an option on larger datasets is confusing.



When a user eventually finds a map, there are a few ways to edit it. These features remind me why I loved recommending GeoFRED to researchers. Maps can be customized by:

- Unit (Index, Percent Change, etc.)
- Year
- Frequency
- Number of color groups
- Data grouping (fractile, equal interval, or user-defined)

The color ramp does not appear to be adjustable.

Final maps can be shared by a link, embedded into a website, or saved (with the creation of a user account).

GeoFRED will be sorely missed. I look forward to seeing if any changes are coming with the new FRED maps format, and hope this can become an essential tool for users in the future.

## Conclusion

I’m not sure how many members had a chance to fully read these reviews, but if only one person found them useful, it means a lot to me. Thank you for allowing me to share my new map and book finds with the MAGIRT membership. I look forward to seeing what comes up next for *base line*.



GREAT MOMENTS IN MAP LIBRARIANSHIP by Jim Coombs

