

Interactive Mapping for Cultivating Community Engagement: KnightLab StoryMap

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CETR Publicly Engaged Scholar In Residence Follow-Up Series

Digital Integration Teaching Initiative (DITI)

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Learning Objectives

During today's workshop, you will...

- **Learn** best practices and questions to consider before creating your StoryMap
- **Determine** how to articulate the choices you make when telling a story using a map
- **Follow** a step-by-step guide for creating, saving, and publishing maps using KnightLab's StoryMap
- **Navigate** StoryMap's map markers and location-finding system
- **Learn how to upload** data into StoryMap, including location information, images, and text

Slides, handouts, and data available at: <https://bit.ly/diti-spring2022-cetr-workshop>



What is a “story map”?

Telling a **story** using **maps**!

“You combine authoritative maps with narrative text, images, and multimedia content. They make it easy to harness the power of maps and geography to tell your story.”

- ESRI Story Maps Website



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Map Overview Back To Beginning

Commonwealth Avenue
Newbury Street
Massachusetts Turnpike
Ipswich Street
Beacon Street
Burbank Street
Westland Avenue
Fenway
Kenmore Square
CITGO
EM

https://gis.nyu.edu/storymaps/fenwaywalk/commwalk/g0/Fenway_Boston_November_2015.jpg
An autumn view of buildings along the Fenway road looking north towards Boylston Street.

Welcome to the Fenway

Welcome to this Community Walk! The purpose of this walk is to introduce people to the history and context of one of the neighborhoods that surround Northeastern. Most importantly, this walk is designed using an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) perspective. ABCD is a philosophy that recognizes communities' abilities to achieve positive change using their own knowledge, skills, and lived experiences as well as existing resources and infrastructure.

Another way to think about it is to consider a community's strengths rather than deficits, or problems.

For example: instead of saying, "This community has a high crime rate and it can't be fixed," we say, "This community has an organization that serves the previously incarcerated and is collaborating within the community to work towards

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Why use a “Map” to tell stories?

- StoryMaps help us render visualized, spatialized, and contextual information about spaces **in the past** or **the present**.
 - StoryMaps can be about places you’ve never been to. The goal is to help users “see” the spaces/places/routes as accurately as possible, and to get a sense of the people and things in the environment.
- **Think about StoryMaps as giving directions.** Take a moment and consider how you got to this workshop today (or how you get to your favorite cafe or market), using words only.
 - What visual markers you would use to convey your movement in/across space to be here today. How would a layperson know where to go?
 - How would it be useful if you combined text and images to help someone find their way? Can you think of some examples?



Big Picture: StoryMaps as Tools for Community Engagement

Geography can serve as a starting point for building a community engagement strategy.

Telling people a story that's relevant to their location is powerful—especially if it's related to an issue they care about.

Giving a narrative form to geographic information impresses it with realistic character that just doesn't come across in charts or graphs. Story maps, which combine interactive maps with multimedia content, provide an engaging way to explore data and navigate information nuances.

- ESRI Story Maps Website



Example Projects Using Maps to Tell Stories

- [“Boston Parks and Playgrounds: Community Scan”](#): uses a mix of textual, image, and geo-location data to tell a story about playgrounds in Boston’s neighborhoods.
- [“Mapping Shared Spaces: A Visual History of Boston’s Black and Jewish Communities”](#): presents the story of migration of Boston religious communities by following the changing locations of places of worship.
- [“Commonwealth: A Offshore wind hub”](#): uses textual, image, video and geo-locations data to showcase key infrastructure of Massachusetts Clean Energy Center’s (MassCEC) Offshore Wind Energy Initiative.





Preparing to Build Your StoryMap



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StoryMap best practices

- Think carefully about the **audience** you are trying to reach with your map. This will impact your language, the order of your points, and the media that you choose.
- **Curate all the content** (locations, images and media, text and captions) **in a document or spreadsheet** before uploading it into KnightLab StoryMap
- Choose stories that have **strong location narratives**, and no more than twenty markers/slides



What you'll need on each marker/slide:

- Slide/location name/title (“headline”)
- Location address/coordinates (you can also place the marker point manually)
- Descriptive text
- Media
 - Media URL (you can also upload media directly from your computer)
 - Media source credit
 - Media caption (this should be descriptive for accessibility purposes)



Optional: Spreadsheet Template

Make a copy of the StoryMap template below and use it to fill in the different sites you want to map, images you want to include, and so on.

Important: make a copy, do not edit the main template!!

(Go to File > Make a copy)

[StoryMap Spreadsheet Template](#)

—Template based on the StoryMap Spreadsheet Template created by Molly Brown, Reference and Outreach Archivist, Northeastern University Library.



Spreadsheet data collection

fx | <http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20158126>

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
1	Slide #	Site Name	Site Location	Image URL/File Location	Image Credit	Image Caption	Headline	Historical Profile/First Person Narrative	Citation(s)	Additional Media	Additional Media Caption & Credit
2	Title Slide	n/a	n/a	http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d20158126	Freedom House Records, Courtesy of Northeastern University Archives and Special Collections	Back Bay Fens, Boston, Mass.	Walking the Emerald Necklace	This is an introduction to the project that will continue on.			
3	Site 1	Back Bay Fens Community Gardens	42.344888, -71.093221	http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d201581723	Freedom House Records, Courtesy of Northeastern University Archives and Special Collections	Community garden in Back Bay Fens.	Back Bay Community Gardens	Two men tend community garden in the Back Bay Fens. A public water building can be seen on the left. The Back Bay Fens (also called The Fens, or Fens) is a freshwater marsh and lagoon area within Boston's larger Emerald Necklace park system.			
4											
5											
6											

1. The slide number can serve as the order in which your sites appear on your map and the site name can be used to label sites on your map

2. The site location is used to identify a point on your map where the site is physically located (address or coordinates)

3. The image URL/File location is useful in keeping track of images of sites. Always credit your images to indicate their origin. Also include a caption describing your image

4. The headline can serve as the official title or label of your site. Including a narrative provides more context as to why your site is important.

5. Don't forget to cite your sources! Also, you may want to include additional media related to your site (e.g. newspaper clippings, additional photos, etc.)



Adding Content to StoryMap

Once you're happy with the organization and order of the items in your spreadsheet, you can copy from these into StoryMap, following the directions on the next slides for adding images, locations, and so on.

This can help you stay organized and keep track of your resources. It's a quick way to storyboard your project, making sure that your flow between locations makes sense, your writing is consistent, and you have the right amount of research and info at each location.

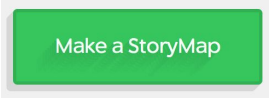


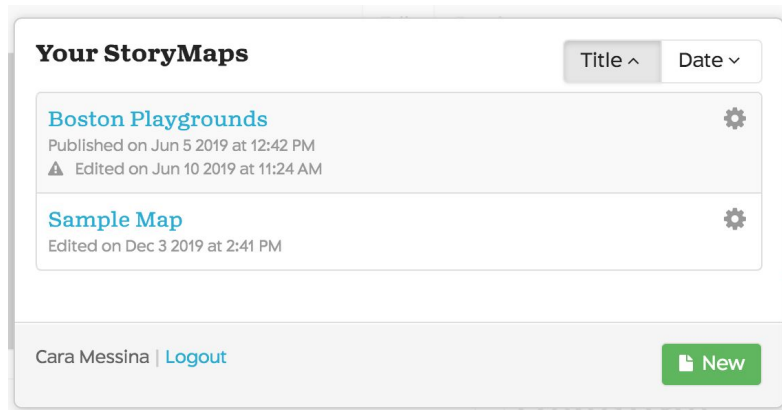
Creating Your Own StoryMap with KnightLab



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Create a StoryMap

- Go to <https://storymap.knightlab.com/>
- Click “Make a StoryMap” 
- Either create a new account or sign in through Google
- Once you’re signed in, click “New Map” (once you have created your map, it will be there for you to work on)
- Name your project



Your StoryMap

Overall options
(like changing map layout)

SAVE OFTEN!

Preview your slides

Preview the
geographic points in all
of your slides

Title and content of
your text box

Color or image for text box
background

Uploading photos
or other media!
Document what
you upload

Check out and add new
slides here



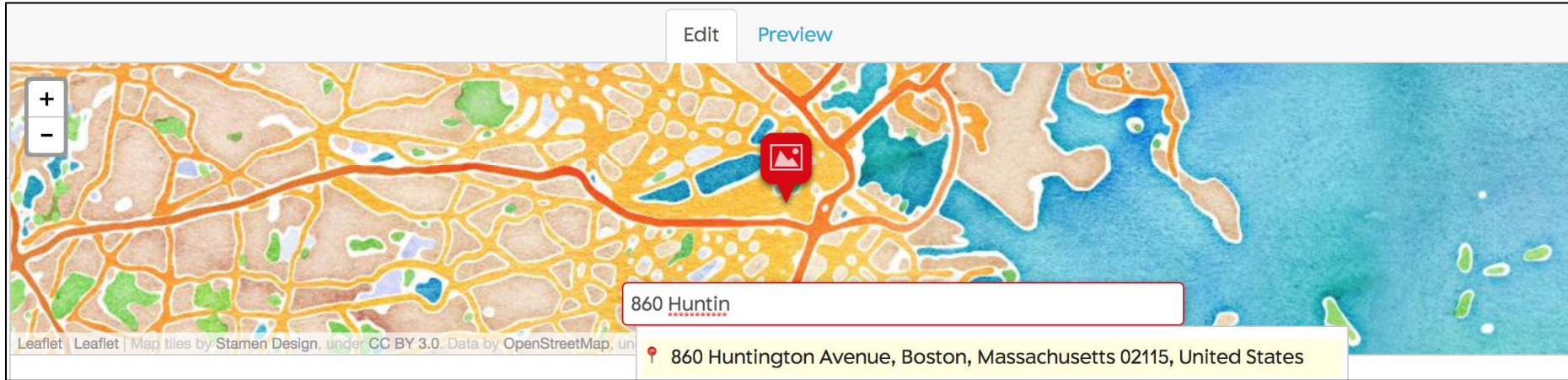
Slides, or map markers

Each slide is a different marker point on your map/image. Each slide contains:

- A **headline and text** - the text box reads basic HTML.
- A **map marker**, which can be placed using Google Maps locations or by placing the marker manually.
- **Media**: images, videos, and sound files can be uploaded. Media should include source citations and a descriptive caption. Since only *one* media file can be uploaded per slide, you can use the text box's HTML to integrate an image or another media type.
- You can also add a **background image or color** for each slide/marker



Add a Location



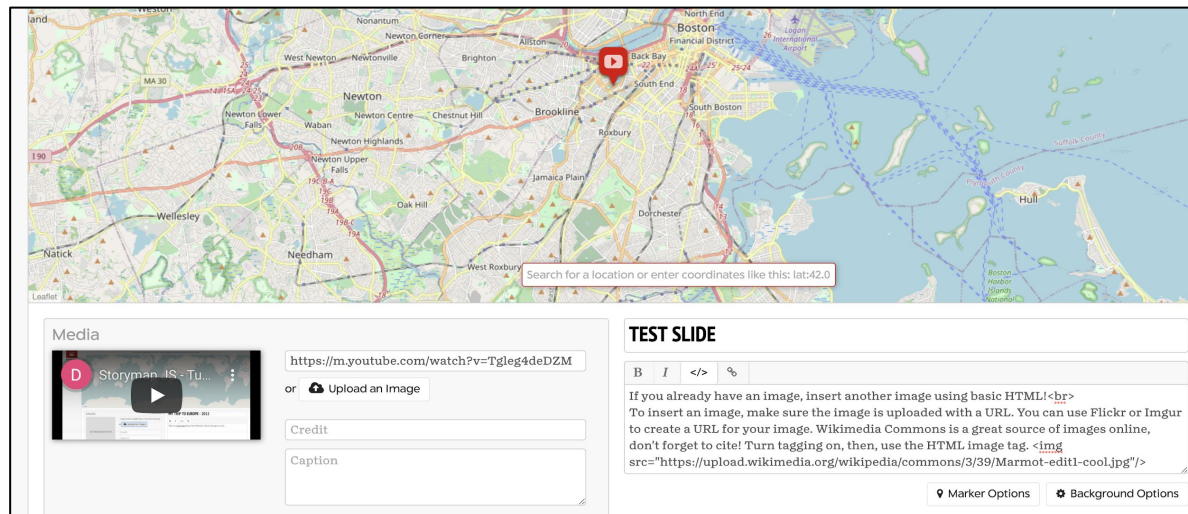
KnightLab StoryMap uses **Google Maps** to locate addresses

StoryMap, however, does **not** always recognize place names; you might need to know the **address** or location of particular structures

You can also **drag and drop the map markers** to the specific location



Add Media and Images to a Slide



Use “media” to upload files. You can upload an image or put a **URL** of an image OR a video (like a YouTube video). If you want to include your own video, you will first have to upload it to YouTube or other online publisher and copy that link.

If you have an image or a video in the “media” section, but want to include an image in the **text**, you can! The text box reads basic HTML.

1. Click the `</>` button (turn on HTML)
2. Get a URL of your image. Wikimedia Commons is a great source of images. Make sure to use the embed file code—don’t forget to cite!
3. Use the HTML `` tag to insert the image.
4. Check the “Preview” to see the image



A Note on Save States

StoryMap does not keep older versions of your project, so once you make and save changes, **you cannot retrieve a previous version.** You can also write over new content if you have your StoryMap open in multiple browser tabs or windows at once.

This is one reason why it is a good idea to plan out your StoryMap in a separate document: if you lose progress, you will have your content saved somewhere else.



More StoryMap best practices

- Save your map frequently as you work - remember that older versions of your map will not be saved
- Don't forget to consider the **tone of the map**: the default for StoryMap can be very upbeat and informal, and that may not match the content you are sharing (think, for example, about renaming the button that says "start exploring")
- Use preview mode to **test your map** after you have created it, to make sure that all the narrative points flow and that the language is clear and concise



Your Turn!

Fenway Community

Walk StoryMap

Practice



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*Feel free to ask questions at any point
during the presentation!*

What You'll Need:

[CETR Spreadsheet Template](#) (make a copy of this to organize your content before you create a project in KnightLab StoryMap)

[CETR Community Walks Demo Handout](#) (use the media, text, and citations assembled by CETR and DITI to practice using the KnightLab StoryMap tool)

<https://storymap.knightlab.com/> (build your StoryMap here!)

[CETR StoryMap Overview Handout](#) (this resource is a KnightLab StoryMap primer)

[CETR Copyright/Fair Use Handout](#) (this resource is a guide to sourcing and citing digital media appropriately)



Takeaways: How can you use interactive mapping tools to leverage community engagement?



Thank you!

Taught by:

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and

Colleen Nugent, NULab Principal Coordinator, Digital Integration Teaching Initiative

If you have any questions, contact us at nulab.info@gmail.com

Have questions? Schedule an appointment with us! <https://calendly.com/diti-nu>

Link to Online Materials: <https://bit.ly/diti-spring2022-cetr-workshop>

