Getting started with UrbanFootprint

What is UrbanFootprint?

UrbanFootprint streamlines urban planning and mobility decisions with actionable data. You can easily assess locations with advanced query and mapping features that bring powerful geospatial data science tools to your work. Using data from hundreds of curated datasets, UrbanFootprint's best-in-class data visualization will help you craft stunning maps with ease for quick location insights.

Create future scenarios to understand the impacts of land use changes or mobility investments. Understand current and future plan impacts in terms of emissions, accessibility, mobility, risk and resilience, water use, energy use, conservation, and more.

Key concepts and terms

What is an organization? An organization is where your projects and scenarios live. Using their email addresses, you can invite additional members to your organization and grant them a viewer, editor, admin, or owner role. Admins and owners can manage projects and members.

What is a project? A project is UrbanFootprint's workspace. It's where you access data, make maps, create scenarios, run analysis, and build reports. Spinning up a project is easy and can be done anywhere in the US. First, you specify your desired project location. UrbanFootprint then quickly creates an existing conditions layer, called the Base Canvas, and loads dozens of ready-to-use land use, environmental, transportation, socio-demographic, and other reference layers.

What is a base canvas? The base canvas is the existing conditions layer for your project. It is the most comprehensive nationwide land use database available, and includes population, residential, employment, parcel, and building data. The base canvas is the foundation that scenarios and analysis are built on.

What is a scenario? At its most basic, a scenario is where you ask "what if?". UrbanFootprint focuses on building land use scenarios and analyzing the associated impacts. For example, you could build a "trend" scenario, where a region continues to develop according to its current and historical trajectory and another that depicts a development and land use pattern that could result from a set of policies you want to test. You can then compare

these side-by-side. In addition, you can play out different trends and policy assumptions related to things like energy and water use, transit networks, and fiscal policies. Scenarios in UrbanFootprint are your sandbox; you can create as many as you like and ask a broad array of questions.

What are UrbanFootprint land use types? Land use types empower you to make sense of existing conditions and build scenarios at various levels of abstraction, from a detailed set of assumptions about physical structures and streets up to simpler land use categories like residential and commercial. Use building and place types, collectively known as land use types, to build scenarios. UrbanFootprint loads a curated library of types to every project and you can also create your own.

Essentials for getting started

User menu

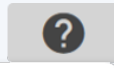Access your account and manage your organization(s) and projects

Help menu

Learn more about UrbanFootprint using hands-on guides and interactive tutorials

Project menu

Create new projects and navigate between existing ones

You can always speak to our support team directly by using the chat window in the lower left of the application. They will help you solve any problems and can direct you to the best training and documentation sources.

Create a project

You can [create as many projects](#) as you want - it's as easy as clicking "Create project" in the projects menu and choosing a location.

Select a project area location from a list of cities, counties, or metro areas (Census-designated places) or upload your own polygon boundary (which can be a shapefile or a polygon you draw yourself on the map). You can choose between a parcel or Census block [base canvas](#).

Select a context area to include a layer with land use data for areas surrounding your project area.
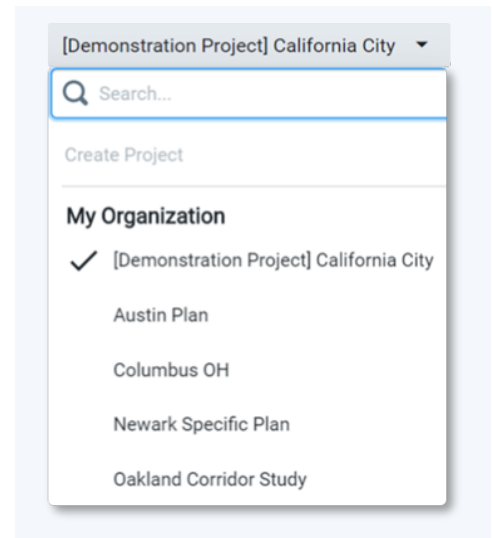
Navigation

The left-hand navigation bar is modeled on a typical workflow. First, explore data and make maps. Next, build scenarios and analyze them. Finally, generate reporting materials. Manage is your hub for managing the building blocks for scenarios and analysis. This sequence is conceptual - UrbanFootprint is designed to enable iteration in your workflow. You can move from one part of the app to the other as your workflow requires.

Explore
View and query data layers. Make map exhibits. Assess existing conditions.

Build
A submode of explore: Use Build to both update existing conditions data and develop scenarios.

Analyze
Another submode of explore: Run UrbanFootprint's analysis modules for existing conditions and scenarios. View analysis results.

Report
Compare scenario and analysis metrics side-by-side. Export charts to Excel to include in reports and presentations.

Manage
Manage your project's land use library and create custom building and place types. View analysis module assumptions and modify them on a per-scenario basis.

Working with data layers

Layers are central to UrbanFootprint. The UrbanFootprint data library, accessed via the layer manager, includes hundreds of curated layers ready out-of-the-box.

Make maps by styling and ordering layers. Use filter queries to select features on the map. View detailed source data for layers and descriptions of layers and columns. The layer list is your workshop for viewing and editing layers, exploring data, and making maps.
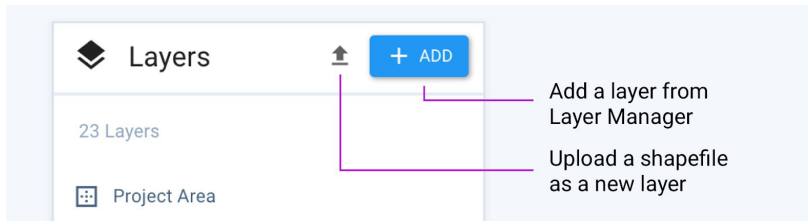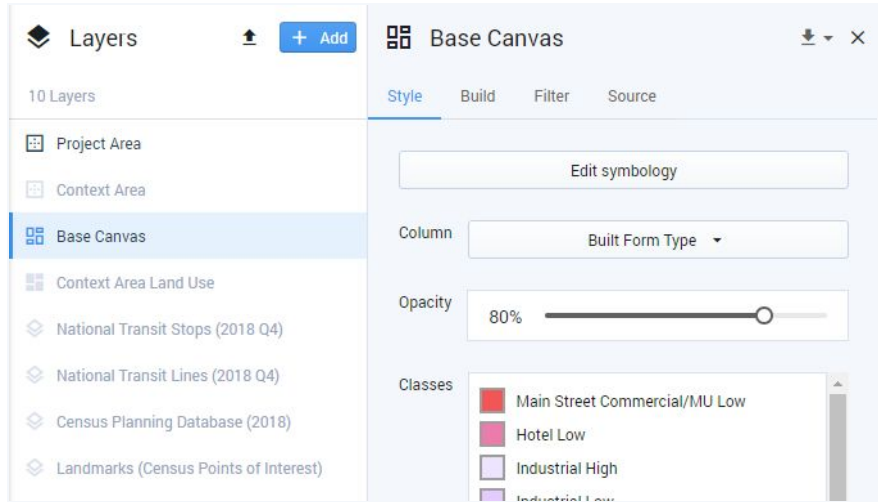
Add layers

Add UrbanFootprint's **curated layers** to your project.

You can also **upload your own** layers.

Add a layer from Layer Manager

Upload a shapefile as a new layer
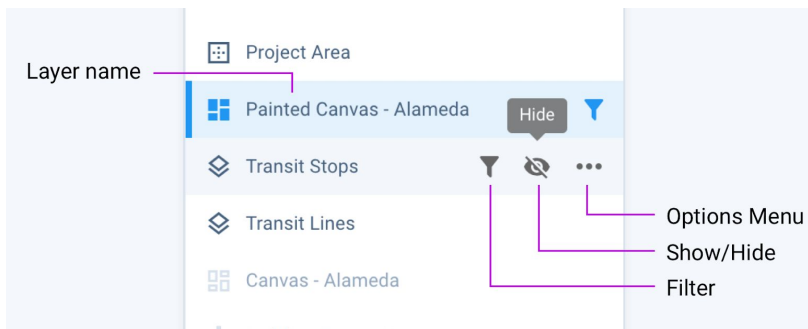
Layer controls

Every layer in the layer list includes these options.

Selecting a layer highlights it in blue and makes it the active layer. This enables the **map tools** for the active layer (e.g. box select, polygon select, etc).

Layer name

Options Menu

Show/Hide

Filter

Layer name
Download options
Close pane

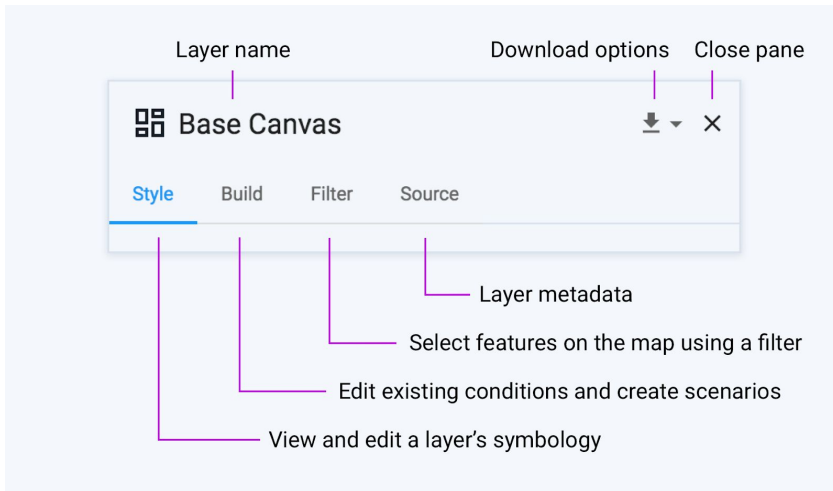## 🔳 Base Canvas

Style Build Filter Source

Layer metadata

Select features on the map using a filter

Edit existing conditions and create scenarios

View and edit a layer's symbology

Layer details

Select a layer in the layer list to make it the **active layer** and open the details pane.

Every layer includes the **style**, **filter**, and **source** tabs.

The canvas layers also include the **build** tab.

In the **base canvas**, edit existing land use data using the build tab.

In the **scenario canvas,** use the build tab to develop scenarios.

Open/close details pane for active layer
Saved map views
Export map layouts

Zoom + orientation

3D view

Map tools

Scale
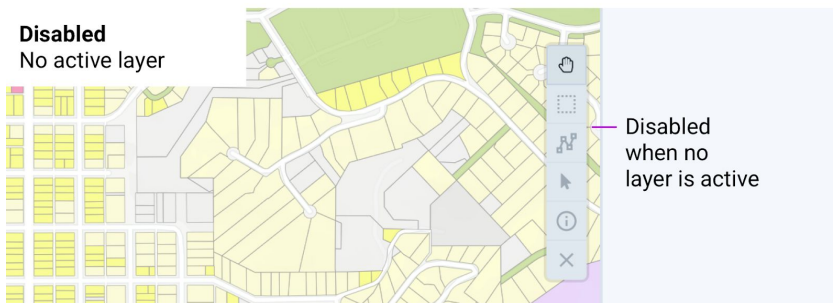Open/close data table for active layer
Basemap menu

Map

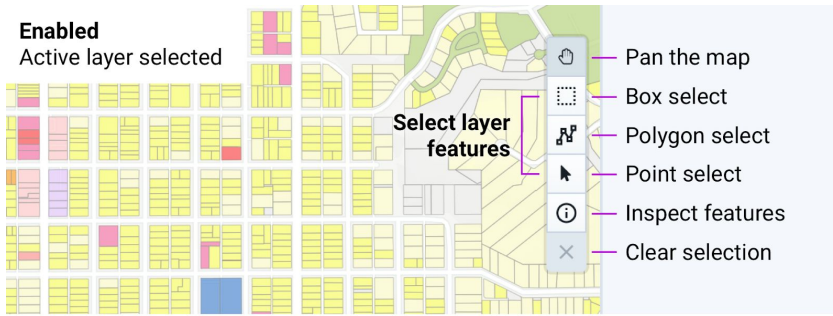View all **currently visible layers** on the map.

Explore and select features from the **active layer**.

Use the **basemap menu** to change the current basemap and turn on and off map labels. Also, view 3D buildings and elevation contours.

Save your **current view** (aka bookmarks) and move the map from one saved view to another with ease.

Export map layouts for use in reports and presentations.

Enabled
Active layer selected

Select layer features

- Pan the map
- Box select
- Polygon select
- Point select
- Inspect features
- Clear selection

Disabled
No active layer

Disabled when no layer is active

Map tools

In order to **enable** the map tools, you must first select a layer in the layer list. This will make it the **active layer**.

You can use the **pan tool** to move around on the map even when there is no active layer.

Select features in the active layer using one of the selection tools.

The **box** and **polygon** tools allow you to select multiple features at once. Use the point tool to select one feature at a time (hold SHIFT to select multiple).

To **view data** for a single feature, use the inspect tool. To view data for multiple features, use the selection tools and open the data table.

What next

If you do not already have an account or just want to learn more...

START TRIAL   **Sign up for our 7-day free trial** and give UrbanFootprint a test drive

BOOK A DEMO   Or **book a demo** with our team to get a walkthrough by an expert

Or consult our other learning and support resources…

Tutorials
Learn how to use UrbanFootprint in context with hands-on tutorials

Solutions for your team
Learn how UrbanFootprint can support your work and mission

Features documentation
Consult our documentation to learn more about specific features

Features overview
Learn more about UrbanFootprint's core features

Additional resources
Check out case studies to see how others are using UrbanFootprint to get work done, as well as our blog, webinars, and more

Contact our support team
You can always chat with our support team using the chat window. You can also email them at support@urbanfootprint.com