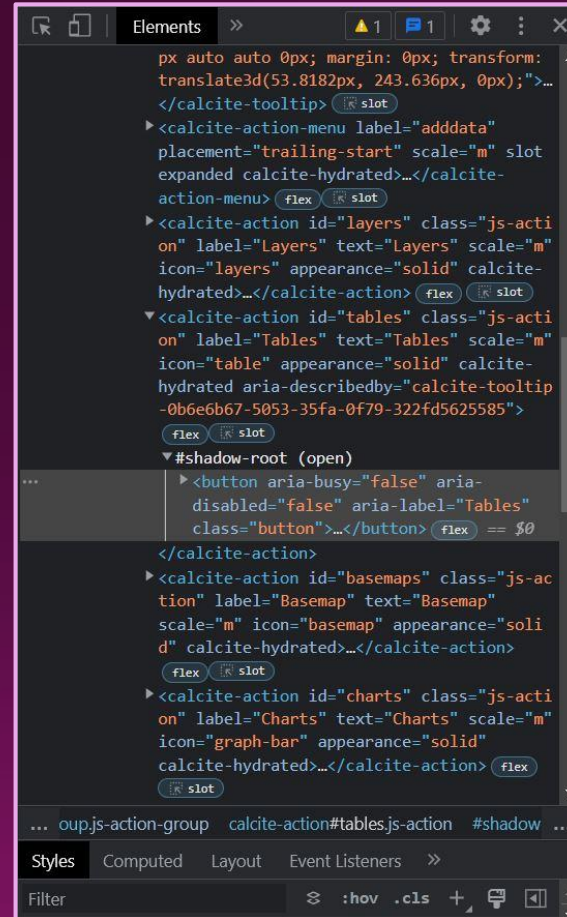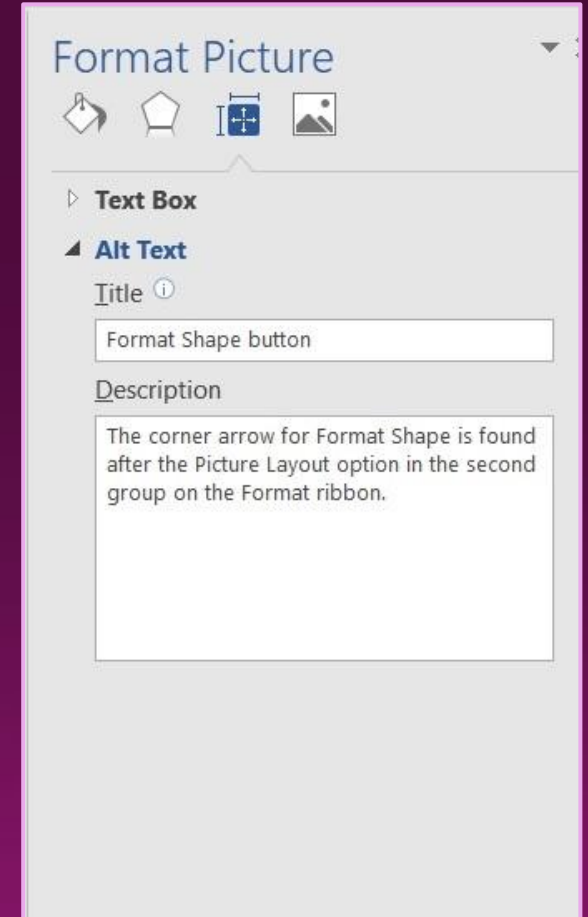Provided by MDOD IT Access Initiative

Digital Mapping Accessibility

Basics of Web Accessibility

- Alt text
- Keyboard access
- Headings and navigation
- Field labels
- Link descriptions
- Reading order
- Focus indicator

Mapping Applications

Source: Google Maps

General Rules of Thumb

- What are you conveying through this map?
  - Can an alterative like a table be used?
- Keep it simple; remove extraneous info
- Check color contrast for text and symbols (4.5:1)
- Use "real" text when possible
- Check TAB order
  - Can you reach every button without the mouse?

Color Contrast

Low Contrast
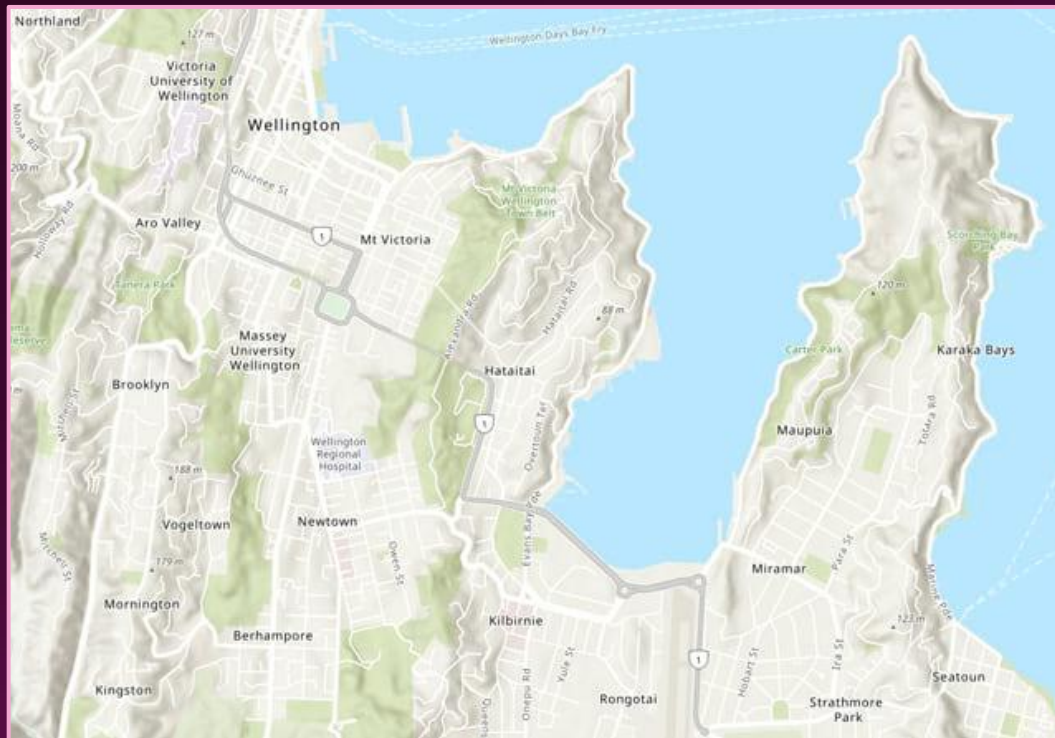
High Contrast
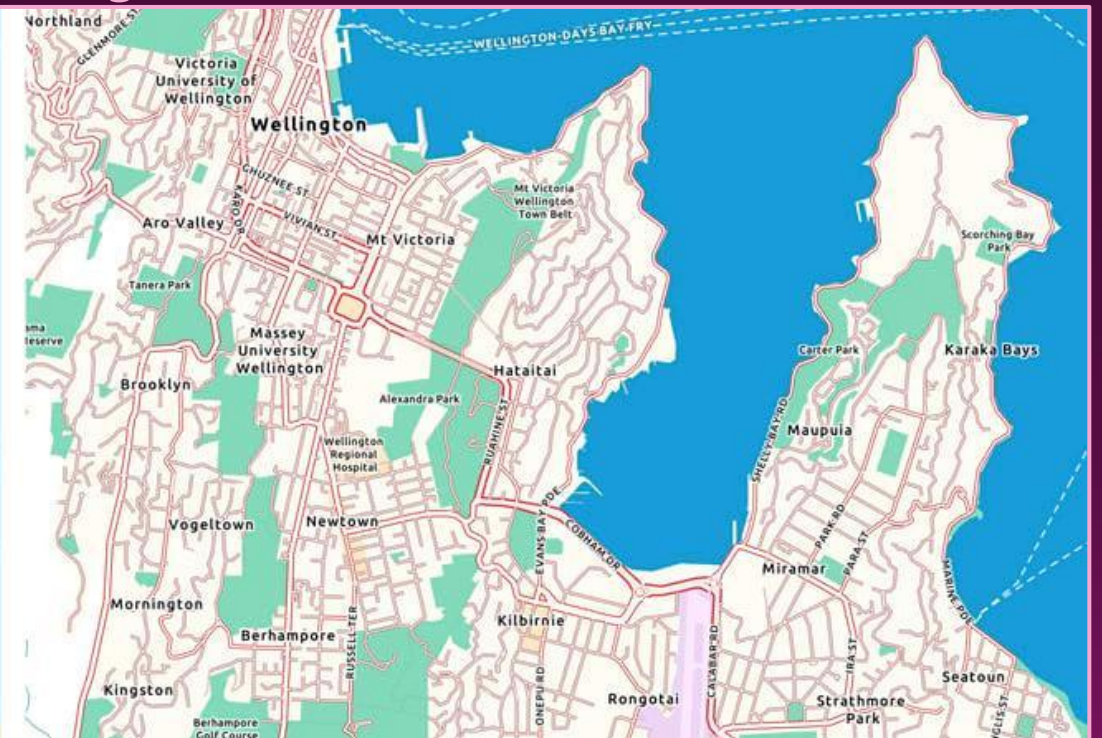
Source: ESRI Accessible Basemap article

Simplicity and Function

- Use an accessible basemap
- Avoid stylizing text
- Limit use of patterns
- Don't stack textures
- Keep maps to a maximum number of styles (6-7)
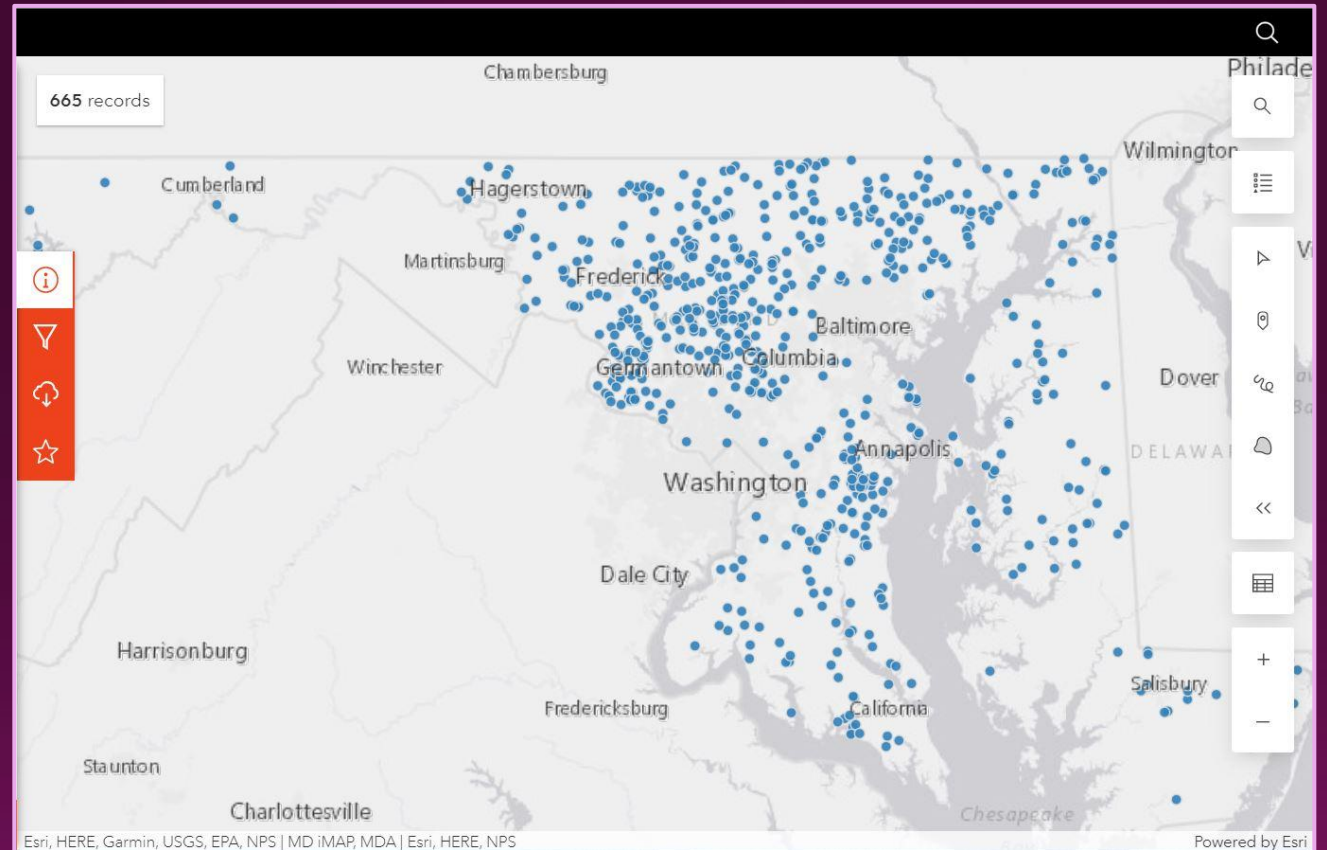
Navigation

- Headings, landmarks, and shortcuts
- Logical flow (control → search → results)
  - Enforce keyboard access
- Skip unnecessary elements (background basemap)
- Provide labels and accessible tooltips

Accessible Alternatives

- Lists
  - Simple, easy to add
  - Search function ability
- Tables
  - Heading row (column if possible)
  - Maintains data references

Building	Street	City	State	Zip
Main Office	11 Main St	Baltimore	MD	21201
Secondary	21 First Ave	Annapolis	MD	21401
IT Desk	31 Home Drive	Frederick	MD	21701
State Park	41 Nature's Lane	Salisbury	MD	21801

Routing Users

- Bypass links ("Skip to Data" or "Skip to Controls")
- Organize reading order to put accessible information first
- Provide an alert on page load that explains shortcuts
- Add extra buttons for these tools to the main menu

Start Here → **Skip To Data** *link*

Building	Street	City
Main Office	11 Main St	Baltimore
Secondary	21 First Ave	Annapolis
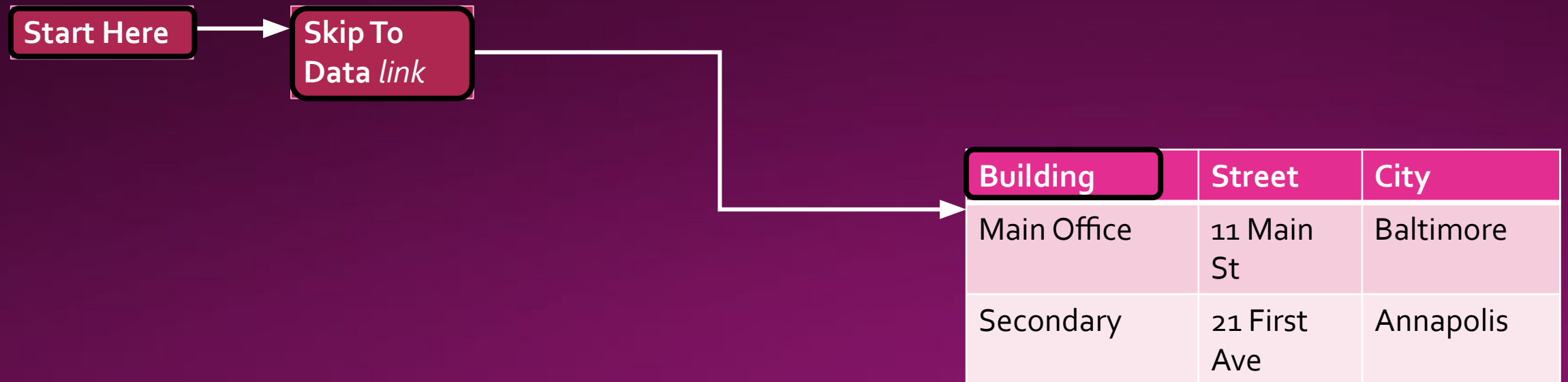
Talk Through It

- First Example: National Park Service Trails
- Second Example: Maryland Licensed Animal Plant Facilities
- (Explain good methods of contrast and or text)
- (Point out navigational challenges for keyboard/SR)
- (Talk about other issues that arise)

Final Thoughts

Checklist

- Keep it simple
- Offer alternatives
- Check your color scheme
- Test with keyboard

Contact & Resources

- Email: mdod.nva@Maryland.gov
- MDOD Website
- Minnesota IT Services
- Esri Accessibility Services