STARS II User Guide– Map Search

For use with the Texas Department of Transportation MS2 Traffic Count Data System module.

This guide provides steps to view detailed traffic count data in the TxDOT Statewide Analysis and Reporting System II (STARS II) map view. Please note that the STARS II website is subject to change, and its appearance may differ from the images and guidance in this document.

MAP SEARCH

STARS II provides map-based searching, which allows users to find traffic count information based on location.

Tips:

- **Speed:** Zoom in to an area before turning the station layers on.

- **Tools:** Features are similar to Google Maps. Additional features include selecting a group of stations by drawing a polygon or buffer around a set of stations.

- **TxDOT Map Layers:** In addition to traffic data layers, functional class, railroad, bridge, MPO, Road Network, and TxDOT District layers can also be added for reference.
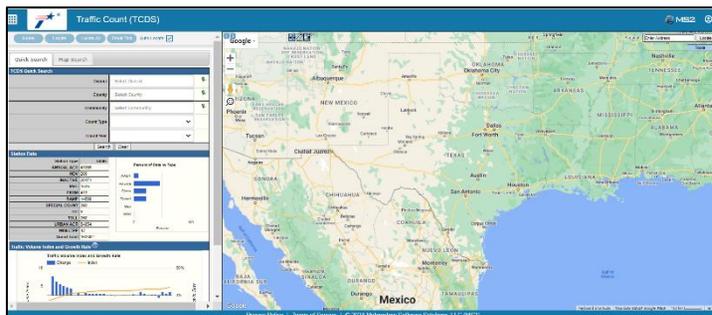
System Profiles: Map Searching is available for all STARS II system users, including public users.
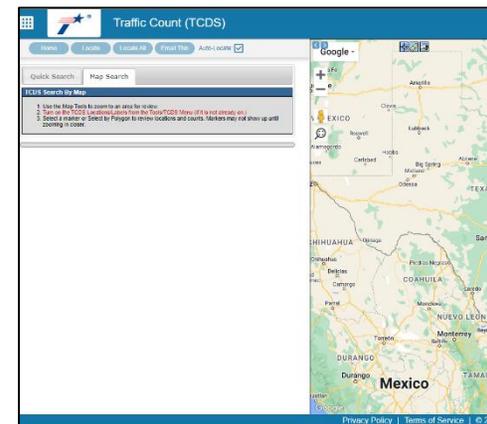
Pre-Requisite Information: Familiarity with online maps and different types of TXDOT traffic stations is beneficial for using the map search.

How to do a Map-Based Search

Initial Steps

1. Access the STARS II Website at https://txdot.public.ms2soft.com/tcds

*The 'Map Search' tab on the left side of the screen provides general information on doing a map-based search.

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Step 1: Zoom to an Area of Interest

1. There are several options for zooming to an area of interest:
   a. Type a city name and state in the address locator on the upper right and click locate (e.g., Abilene, TX).
   b. Use the plus and minus buttons on the upper left to zoom in, then pan by clicking the mouse.
   c. Use the magnifier on the upper left to select an area by drawing a rectangle.

## Step 2: Open the Map Tools

1. Click the +/- sign on the upper right to expand the 'Tools' menu.
2. Click the 'TCDS' button at the bottom of the 'Tools' menu. The 'TCDS' menu should open just to the left of the 'Tools' menu.
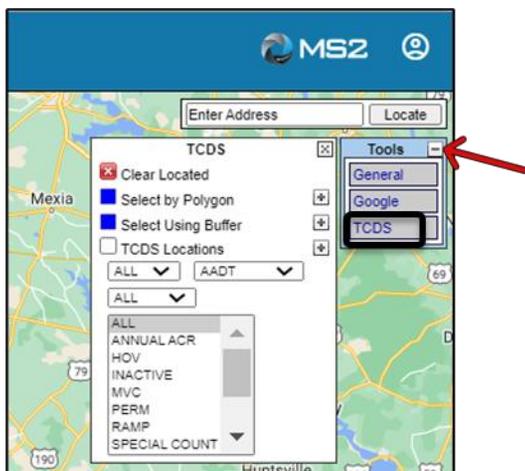
Step 3: Configure Traffic Stations

Note: The location of the menus can vary depending on the user's computer or phone configuration.

1. Use the drop-down menus at the bottom of the 'TCDS' menu to configure the stations that will display.

   a. The top drop-down menu displays stations by category and defaults to showing all stations. 'Annual ACR' and 'Urban ACR' are commonly requested station types. 'Annual ACR' will display the annual cycle counts, and 'Urban ACR' will display the 5-year cycle counts. Click the +/- sign to the right of 'TCDS Locations' for information about the station types:
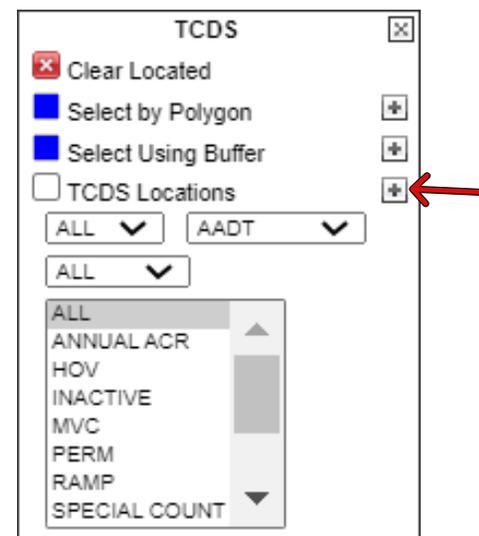
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## Step 3: Configure Traffic Stations Continued...

Note: You can also select multiple categories by holding the 'Control' key and selecting any combination of categories. Below is an example of selecting only MVC and PERM category stations to display:
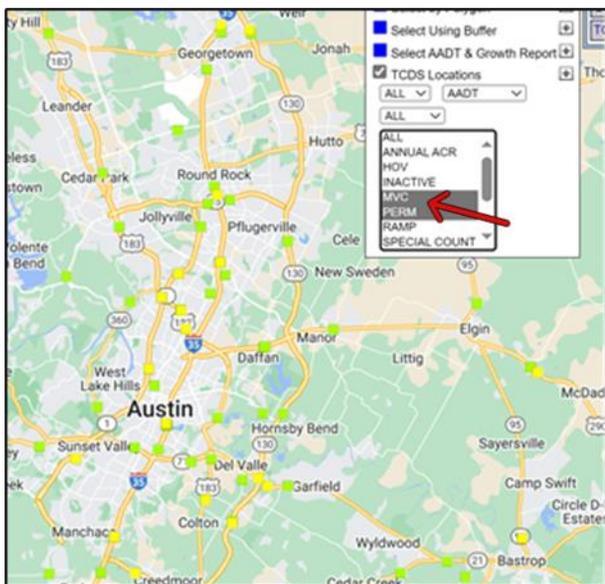
b. The top left drop-down menu is used to select a specific year and, by default, is set to all years. The most recent count for all stations is displayed when 'all' years are selected. To view a specific prior year, select a year from this drop-down menu.

c. The 'AADT' drop-down menu toggles between AADT and traffic station ID labeling. AADT stands for average annual daily traffic and represents the typical daily traffic count for the traffic stations.

d. The bottom drop-down menu is used to toggle on or off 'inactive' stations.

Step 4: Display Traffic Stations

1. Click the check box to the left of 'TCDS Locations' to display the stations. The map will update with traffic stations, as in the second image below. The first number is the annual traffic count (AADT), and the second number in parenthesis indicates the count year.
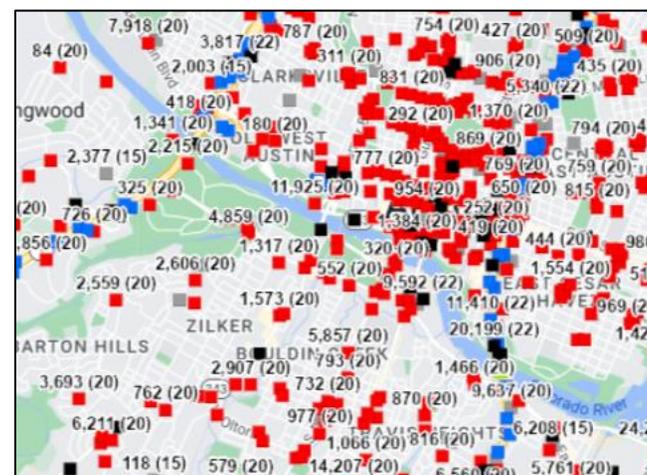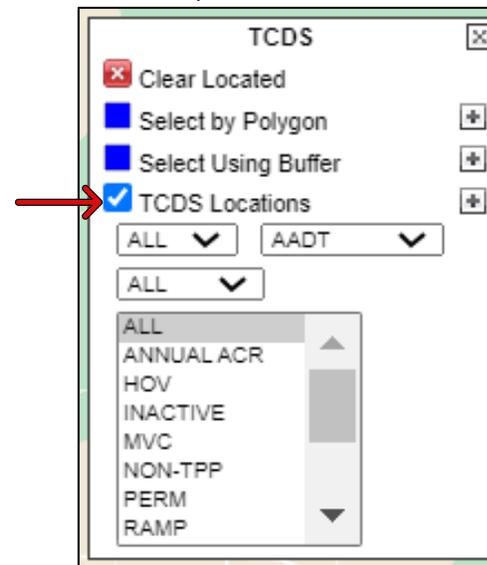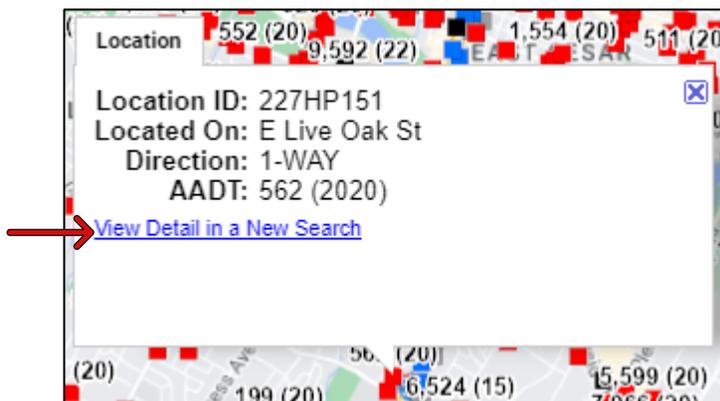
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Step 5: Open a Station Record

1. Hover your cursor over a station and click to open a pop-up.
   a. Click 'View Detail in a New Search':

The traffic count information at the station will appear on the left-hand side of the screen, as shown below:

Step 6: View Detailed Count Data

1. In the traffic count information screen, scroll down to view a count table. In this example, the 'Volume Count' table is shown. Other count tables may include 'Classification,' 'Speed,' and 'WIM.' Click the 'eye' icon to open the traffic count report.
   a. The 'Volume Count Report' will open as shown below:

VOLUME COUNT

	Date	Int	Total
👁	Tue 4/7/2020	15	537
👁	Wed 9/18/2019	15	1,256
👁	Mon 9/17/2018	15	1,256
👁	Mon 11/6/2017	15	1,418
👁	Mon 8/29/2016	15	1,617
👁	Mon 3/23/2015	15	1,473
👁	Mon 8/4/2014	15	1,135
👁	Mon 8/12/2013	15	1,177
👁	Wed 11/16/2011	15	1,526

You can view 15-minute and hourly data and related traffic count information on this screen.

Appendix – Traffic Terms

Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT): The annual traffic count represents the average number of vehicles per day at a traffic count location. This figure includes considerations for seasonal variation and the vehicle classifications at the count location. AADT is calculated in STARS II using the AASHTO "average of averages" method.

Traffic Station: A traffic station is a location where a traffic count is conducted with traffic counting equipment or derived. The STARS II system displays AADTs for the following count station types.

- Annual ACR: Annual traffic counts taken on Texas state and national highway system roadways and a small set of additional roadways. These are 24-hour counts factored for seasonal variation and vehicle classifications, which comprise traffic at the count location.
- HOV: Traffic volume data for various types of managed lanes, express lanes, toll lanes, and high-occupancy vehicle lanes are provided as they become available.
- INACTIVE: Traffic count locations where data collection is discontinued.
- MVC: Manual Vehicle Classification counts are annual 24-hour video-based counts of classification data.
- PERM: Continuous count locations that collect daily traffic count data.

- RAMP: Ramp counts are 24-hour vehicle counts on ramp locations. In the STARS II system, these counts are factored for seasonal variation, which comprises traffic at the count location.
- TIC: Travel Information Centers.
- TOLL: Traffic volume on a tolled roadway.
- URBAN ACR: Urban ACR counts are conducted on a 5-year cycle, typically on local or county roads. These are 24-hour counts, which in the STARS II system are factored for seasonal variation and vehicle classifications that comprise traffic at the count location.
- WIM/LTPP: Weigh-in-motion continuous count locations.