

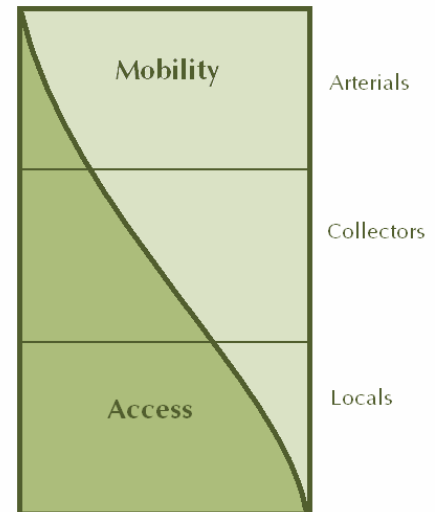


FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION IN A NUTSHELL

Streets are classified by how they function within a transportation system: their “functional classification.” For example, local streets are intended to serve residential areas, not heavy traffic; while interstates *are* designed for heavy traffic.

Roads are classified based primarily upon the role they play within the transportation system — not on the size of the road or the amount of traffic it carries. Therefore, a “principal arterial” in one town may be the same width and have the same number of lanes as a “collector” in another town — the roads may look the same, but they serve different functions. Conversely, an interstate running through Los Angeles looks very different than Interstate 84 running through the Treasure Valley, but both are interstates and serve the same function in a manner appropriate to their regions.

Much of the difference among the classification of roads is the amount of “access” (driveways, intersections, etc.) to that road. Imagine the two extremes: an interstate has very little access, while the local road where you live likely has a lot of access. More access and slower speeds generally go hand-in-hand, while less access lends itself to higher speeds and more traffic.



Functional Classification Definitions

Interstate – This is a road that is part of the federally designated interstate system. Access is controlled, which allows for high traffic volumes and speeds. **Example: Interstate 84.**

Expressway – An expressway functions similar to an interstate and is mainly intended to provide a route within a region. *Currently, there are no expressways in the Treasure Valley; however, there are plans for US Highway 20/26 and State Highway 16 to eventually become expressways.*

Principal Arterial – Principal arterials serve major regional activity centers and carry most of the traffic entering and leaving urban areas, as well as the majority of “through” traffic. They have more access than an expressway, but less than a minor arterial. **Example: State Highway 44.**

Minor Arterial – Minor arterials connect with and augment the principal arterial system and generally are used for shorter trips. More emphasis is placed on land access than principal arterials. **Examples: Boise Avenue in east Boise and Orchard Avenue near Lake Lowell.**

Collector – Collectors provide traffic circulation within residential, commercial, and industrial areas and carry trips to and from arterials. Single family homes generally do not have driveways onto collectors, though some do. **Example: Larger “through” streets in residential neighborhoods.**

Local – Local roads include most residential and other “small” streets. They are typically not identified on functional classification maps. **Example: Most residential streets.**

Find maps showing functional classifications at www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/func-maps.htm.