Functional Classification System Revisions

Two years after the Nation’s Census that is taken every decade, urban area boundaries are adjusted according to the growth and future growth of the areas. There might be some urban areas dropped or added onto the system. This is based off the data received from the Bureau of Census as a result of the last census taken. Afterwards, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation (ODOT) and officials of each urban area have the opportunity to adjust these urban area boundaries. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) must approve any new adjustments to urban area boundaries.

Once the urban area boundaries have been approved by the FHWA, the officials of both urban areas and counties will be given the opportunity to revise their functional classification system. During the next ten years, it is possible to revise the functional classification system, but with tighter restrictions. Any part of the functional classification system that needs to be revised must be approved by the FHWA.

Revisions to the functional classification system must be made through ODOT by using the electronic application FC-FORM 121U for the Urban System or FC-FORM 121 for the Rural System. These applications are obtain by either calling 405-521-3385 or email ghowell@odot.org. ODOT will review each application for revision and conduct an on-site review of any proposed addition to the system. After ODOT’s concurrence, application for revision will be sent to FHWA for approval or disapproval. ODOT will send notification to the local officials of FHWA action.

The following requirements must be observed while making a revision application. Classified routes must begin and end at a higher or equal classified route in order to ensure connectivity. A stub route is permissible if it terminates at a major traffic generator. This could include any recreational facility providing there is a direct public access, an industrial area, military base, or any other areas that would generate heavy volume of traffic may qualify as a stub route. No proposed routes, except where the proposed roadway will definitely be constructed within three years.

Other than the period of adjusting urban boundaries, the following requirements must be observed while making a revision application. The applicant must remove within their area an equal or greater portion of an existing classified route which is of the same or higher class to the classified route to be added.

What Is Functional Classification?

The functional classification system has been helpful for many years as a management tool in a variety of areas pertaining to highways. Federal, State and local governments use this tool to assign jurisdictional responsibility, allocate funds, and establish design standards. It is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the function of roads and streets and adjustments in this system was necessary.

The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1966 required the use of an updated functional highway classification system to modify the Federal-Aid highway system by July 1, 1976. After the 1976 federally mandated functional classification of highways was completed, States had routinely updated this functional classification to meet Federal-aid highway programs classification requirements. However, these adjustments resulted in the national functional classification of highways being no longer consistent among the States.

Through legislation of the Interstate Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, the U.S. Department of Transportation recommended that a reclassification study be completed prior to designation of the National Highway System to provide an interconnected system of principal arterial routes that serve major population centers, intermodal transportation facilities, and major travel destinations.

In 1993, the functional reclassification was completed and the National Highway System was established in November, 1995. The functional classification of 1993 has been routinely updated and is still of benefit today as an useful management tool.
### Principle Arterial Routes

Principal Arterial Routes within rural areas consist of a connected rural network of continuous routes having the following characteristics:

1. Highways having high density of intrastate and interstate travel.
2. Highways that serve urbanized areas and the majority of small urban areas. The rural principal arterial routes serve urban areas if the routes either penetrate urban boundaries or come within 10 miles.
3. Provide an integrated network without stub connections except where unusual geographic or traffic flow conditions dictate otherwise.

The following are characteristics of principal arterial routes within urbanized and small urban areas:

1. Serves the major traffic movements within urbanized areas connecting central business districts, outlying residential areas, major intercity communities, and major suburban centers.
2. Serves a major portion of the trips entering and leaving the urban area, as well as the majority of through traffic desiring to bypass the central city.
3. Provides continuity for all rural arterials which intercept the urban area.

No firm spacing rule can be established that will apply in all, or even most circumstances. The spacing of principal arterial routes in larger urban areas may vary from less than one mile in the highly developed central business areas to five miles or more in the sparsely developed locations.

Service to abutting land for principal arterial routes should be subordinate to the provision of travel service with major traffic movements. Only facilities within the other principal arterial routes are capable of providing any direct access to adjacent land, and such service should be purely incidental to the primary functional responsibility of these routes.

### Minor Arterial Routes

Requirements for minor arterial routes within the rural areas are as follows:

1. Link cities and larger towns and other traffic generators that are capable of attracting travel over long distances and form an integrated network providing intersectate and intercounty service. Minor arterial routes within rural areas serve an urban area if the route either penetrates or comes within 2 miles of the urban boundary.
2. Routes are spaced at intervals consistent with population density so that all developed areas of the State are within a reasonable distance of an arterial highway.
3. Provide service to roads with trip length and travel density greater than those served by collectors or local routes. Minor arterial routes have relatively high overall travel speeds and minimum impedance to through traffic.

Minor Arterial Routes within urban areas contain facilities that place more emphasis on land access. Requirements for minor arterial routes within the urban areas are as follows:

1. Serves trips of moderate length at a lower level of travel mobility than principal arterial routes.
2. Provides access to geographic areas smaller than those served by principal arterial routes.
3. Provides intracommunity continuity, and does not penetrate identifiable neighborhoods.
4. The spacing of minor arterials in urban areas varies from 0.125 to 0.5 mile in the central business district to 2 to 3 miles in suburban locations, but should not be more than 1 mile in fully developed areas.

### Local Routes

Characteristics of local routes within rural areas:

1. Serves primarily to provide access to adjacent land.
2. Provides service to travel over short distances. Local routes will constitute the rural mileage not classified as part of the principal arterial, minor arterial, or collector routes.

Characteristics of local routes within urban areas:

1. Comprises all facilities not on any of the higher routes.
2. Provides direct access to land and to higher routes.
3. Through traffic usage is discouraged.

### Major Collector Routes

Characteristics within rural areas:

1. Provides service to any county seat not on an arterial route, to other traffic generators of equivalent intracity importance, such as consolidated schools, shopping points, county parks, important mining and agricultural areas, etc.
2. Link the above traffic generators with larger towns, cities, or with routes of higher classification.
3. Serves the more important intracity travel.

Characteristics within urban areas:

1. Collects traffic from local streets in residential neighborhoods and channels it into an arterial route.
2. Provides both land access service and traffic circulation within commercial areas, industrial areas, and residential neighborhoods.
3. Operating characteristics include higher speeds and more signalized intersections.

### Minor Collector Routes

Characteristics within rural areas:

1. Be spaced at intervals, consistent with population density, to collect traffic from local roads and streets and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of a collector route.
2. Provides service to the remaining smaller communities not served by a higher route.

Characteristics within urban areas:

1. Serve both land access and traffic circulation in lower density residential and commercial/industrial areas.
2. Penetrate residential neighborhoods, often for a short distance.
3. Distribute and channel trips between Local Roads and Arterials, usually over a distance of less than 3/4 mile.
4. Operating characteristics include lower speeds and fewer signalized intersections.

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### Functional Classification of Rural Arterial Routes

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### Access Control

Access Control is not available in the Universe database.

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