

Maine Department of Transportation

FEDERAL FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

In simplistic terms, “functional classification” reflects a highway’s balance between providing land access versus mobility. Functional classification is the process by which public streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Generally, highways fall into one of four broad categories-- *principal arterial*, *minor arterials*, *collector roads*, and *local roads*. **Arterials** provide longer through travel between major trip generators (larger cities, recreational areas, etc.); **local** roads provide access to private property or low volume public facilities; and **collector** roads collect traffic from the local roads and also connect smaller cities and towns with each other and to the arterials.

Principal Arterial - Interstate

A series of continuous routes that have trip lengths and volumes indicative of substantial statewide or interstate travel. This classification is for highways designated as interstate and include I-95, I-195, I-295, and I-395. There are almost 375 miles of Interstate highway in Maine.

Principal Arterial - Other Freeways and Expressways

These roads must be divided highway with partial (freeway) or full (expressway) control-of-access. Primarily serve through traffic and major circulation movements within federally-defined Urban Areas. An example is *Route 1 in Brunswick between Main Street and Cooks Corner*. There are about 20 miles of this classification in Maine.

Other Principal Arterial

Highways which provide long distance connections, but do not fit the two categories above. There are 927 miles in Maine and there are two subcategories –rural and urban.

- 1) **Rural:** Corridor movement suitable for substantial statewide or interstate travel between larger population centers. (*ex. Route 3, Augusta to Belfast*) Of the total mileage, there are almost 800 rural miles.
- 2) **Urban:** Routes which carry through traffic and most of the trips entering/leaving a Federally-designated Urban Area. They provide continuity for all rural arterials that intercept the urban boundary. (*ex. Western Ave. in Augusta or Brighton Avenue in Portland*) There are almost 150 miles of this type.

Minor Arterial

A series of continuous routes (1,246 miles in Maine) that should be expected to provide for relatively high overall travel speeds with minimum interference to through movement, and are defined as two distinct types:

- 1) **Rural:** Form a network of just over 1,000 miles in Maine, in conjunction with the rural principal arterial system, with service characteristics that:
 - link cities, large towns and other traffic generators (i.e. major resort areas) that are capable of attracting travel over long distances.
 - integrate interstate and intercounty service

- have spacing consistent with population density so all developed areas are within a reasonable distance from the arterial system
 - provide service to corridors with trip lengths and travel densities greater than those served by rural collector or local systems. (*ex. Rt. 27 from Farmington to Sugarloaf Mtn. and the Canadian border OR Rt. 3 between Ellsworth and Bar Harbor*)
- 2) **Urban:** Within a Federally designated Urban Area, these roads interconnect with and augment the urban principal arterial system. They distribute travel to geographic areas smaller than those of higher systems and there are about 230 miles in Maine. (*ex. Hogan Road in Bangor, or Stone St. in Augusta from the East side rotary to Eastern Ave. (Rt. 17)*)

Collectors (about 6,000 miles of urban and rural collectors in Maine)

- 1) **Rural:** Generally serve travel of primarily intracounty rather than statewide importance and travel distances are shorter than arterial routes.
- a. **Major Collector Roads:** (a) Serve county seats not on arterial routes, larger towns not directly served by higher systems (b) link nearby larger towns, or cities, or with route of higher classifications (c) serve more important intracounty travel corridors which could connect consolidated schools, shipping points, important agricultural areas, etc. Of the total mileage, there are over 3,200 miles in Maine. (*ex. Rt. 9 in Augusta from intersection of Rt. 17 to the intersection of Rt. 126 in Randolph*)
 - b. **Minor Collector Roads:** Spaced consistent with population density to accommodate local roads within reasonable distance of collector roads. Provide service to smaller communities. Link locally important traffic generators with the arterial system. There are about 2,200 miles in Maine. (*ex. Pond Road/Neck Road between Manchester and Litchfield*)
- 1) **Urban:** Provide both land access and traffic circulation within urban residential neighborhoods and commercial and industrial areas in federally designated Urban Areas. Route density is much higher than in rural areas. There are about 530 miles in Maine. (*ex. Buck Street in Bangor next to the racetrack, or Hotel Rd. in Auburn from Rt. 122 near the L/A airport to the West Auburn Rd.*)

Local Roads

Provide access to adjacent land and provide service to travel over relatively short distances as compared to the higher systems. (over 14,300 miles in Maine)

- 1) **Rural:** All rural roads not classified as principal arterial, minor arterial, or collector roads. There are about 12,300 miles in Maine. (*ex. Caribou Lake Road between Washburn and Caribou, or Flag Pond Rd. in Saco from Rt. 1 west to Rt. 112*)
- 2) **Urban:** All urban streets in a federally designated Urban Area that are not in one of the other higher systems. They permit direct access to land, route density is higher than rural areas, and they connect to the higher systems. They also offer lower mobility and service and through-traffic movement is deliberately discouraged. There are about 2,000 miles in Maine. (*ex. Purington Avenue in Augusta between North Belfast Avenue and South Belfast Avenue, or Longfellow Ave. in Brunswick from Rt. 123 to Maine St.*)