

## Functional Classification in a Nutshell

Roadways are classified by how they function within a transportation system. Functional classification divides these roadways into three categories: arterial, collector, and local roads. Typically, travelers will use a combination of all three types of roadways for their trips. For example, local roads are intended to serve residential areas, and collector roads funnel traffic from neighborhoods to busy arterial roads.

In general, roads either serve to provide mobility or access for vehicles to locations. Mobility is determined by the vehicular speed and the distance of the roadway without interruptions; its focus is moving travelers from point A to point B in the most efficient way. Arterial roads, highways, and interstates are good examples of roadways with high mobility because they move a large volume of vehicles, at higher speeds, with fewer access points.

Access is determined by the frequency of entry and exit opportunities on a road; local and collector roads typically have a higher level of accessibility because there are more interruptions (e.g., intersections, driveways, etc.).

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, less traffic, and slower speeds generally go hand-in-hand, while less access lends itself to higher speeds and more traffic.

### Functional Classification Definitions

**Arterial** – Arterials include interstates and expressways, as well as roads that carry most of the traffic entering and leaving urban areas. Access is controlled or limited, which allows for high traffic volumes and speeds. There are approximately 814 miles of arterial roads in Ada and Canyon Counties.

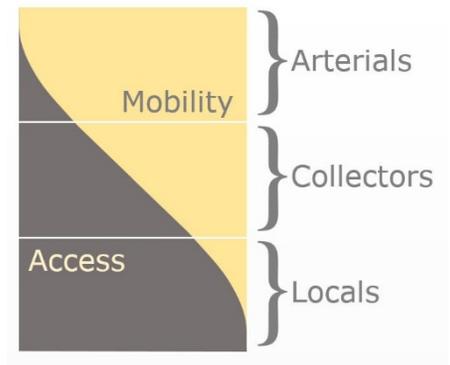
Example: Interstate 84, State Highway 44, Eagle Road, and Midland Boulevard (Nampa).

**Collector** – Collectors provide traffic circulation within residential, commercial, and industrial areas and carry trips to and from arterials. There are approximately 750 miles of collector roads in Ada and Canyon Counties.

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 more information and maps showing functional classifications at [www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/functional.htm](http://www.compassidaho.org/prodserv/functional.htm).

# Functional Classification Resources

A number of documents are available on the COMPASS website–

Go to [www.compassidaho.org](http://www.compassidaho.org)

Open the **Products, Services, & Data** menu

Click on **Functional Street Classification**

This includes:

- *Functional Classification in a Nutshell* [this fact sheet]
- *Functional Classification Planning (2040) vs. Federal Aid (2025) Maps* [presentation]
- *Highway Functional Classification – Concepts, Criteria, and Procedures* (FHWA)
- *2040 Functional Classification Map for Ada and Canyon Counties*
  - This map does not show collector or local streets
  - This map serves a different purpose than the 2025 map listed below (see "*Functional Classification Planning (2040) vs. Federal Aid (2025) Maps*," listed above, for information on the differences)
- *Federal-Aid Functional Classification Map (2025)*
  - This map serves a different purpose than the 2040 map listed above (see "*Functional Classification Planning (2040) vs. Federal Aid (2025) Maps*," listed above, for information on the differences)