

# FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION CHANGE PROCESS

## About this Document

Under 23 CFR 470.105(b), state transportation agencies have the primary responsibility for overseeing functional classification of roadways. The Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) works in cooperation with the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Regional Development Commissions (RDCs) to assign functional classification to roadways and to maintain the classifications within the ranges allowed under federal guidelines. While comprehensive reviews of the statewide functional classification system are undertaken approximately every 10 years or as needed, maintenance of the functional classification is ongoing due to the addition of new roadways or changing function of existing roadways. This document describes the process for initiating and approving revisions related to the general maintenance of the functional classification system.

## Approval of Changes to Functional Classification for Local Roads

Modification to the functional classification of a road segment can be considered accepted and operational upon receipt of the required MnDOT District Planner/District State Aid Engineer's signature on the change request form.

- Changes to local non-state-aid-eligible roadways require the District Planner's signature
- Changes to state-aid-eligible roads require the District State Aid Engineer's signature

It is the responsibility of the submitting RDC and/or MPO staff to verify that the proposed change conforms to the [FHWA Functional Classification Guidelines](#) (2013) and that conformance is reflected in the change request form. In signing the request, District Planner/State Aid Engineer concurs that the change conforms with FHWA Guidelines.

Official FHWA approval of all functional classification changes, as required per 23 CFR 470.105(b)(2), occurs as part of the annual functional classification reporting process. MnDOT's Office of Transportation System Management (OTSM) submits an annual report to FHWA that identifies the functional classification changes that occurred during the previous year and requests FHWA approval of these changes. As part of the annual report, OTSM reviews the statewide functional classification percentages to verify the system percentages are consistent with the FHWA Functional Classification Guidelines.

OTSM serves as a technical liaison. If there are questions regarding the FHWA Guidelines or the most recent statewide functional classification review (2015), contact Bobbi Retzlaff at [bobbi.retzlaff@state.mn.us](mailto:bobbi.retzlaff@state.mn.us).

## Approval of Changes to Functional Classification for Trunk Highways

Trunk Highway functional classification changes initiated by MnDOT are processed and approved by the District in cooperation with the RDC or MPO. MnDOT will notify staff of the appropriate regional planning organization well in advance of the proposed change. The District Planner must complete a "Functional Classification Change Request" form as described below. In signing the request, the District Planner concurs that the change is in conformance with the FHWA Guidelines.

- Changes to trunk highways initiated by MnDOT:
  - Require the District Planner's signature.

- Send the completed “Functional Classification Change Request” form to the OTSM liaison, Bobbi Retzlaff ([bobbi.retzlaff@state.mn.us](mailto:bobbi.retzlaff@state.mn.us)).
- Changes to trunk highways initiated by local authorities:
  - Follow the procedures below for local roads.

### **Functional Classification Assignment Process for New Local-Authority Roads**

**Step 1** County or City agency consults the FHWA’s Functional Classification Guidelines to determine the appropriate classification. If the classification is higher than Local, the RDC/MPO reviews the proposed classification for conformance within their jurisdiction. If the proposed new roadway abuts an RDC/MPO boundary, the RDC/MPO will coordinate with the adjacent planning authority and local jurisdictions (county/city) to ensure urban/rural continuity.

**Step 2** County or City agency informs MnDOT that a new roadway is open to traffic.

- A. During MnDOT’s annual **Status Review process**, indicate the new route as instructed. A minimal set of roadway characteristics, including functional classification, should be noted. For more information, refer to the “General Map Update Methods” section on MnDOT’s Data [Collection Methods](#) webpage.
- B. FUTURE: MnDOT’s Shared Centerlines Initiative will allow local partners to “redline” new roadways in an online GIS environment. MnDOT anticipates this option to be available in 2016.

**Step 3** MnDOT will add the road to the state linear referencing system (LRS) with the functional classification indicated.

### **Functional Classification Change Process for Existing Local-Authority Roads**

**Step 1** County or City agency submits a written request to the MPO, RDC or agency designated to represent the RDC area in case of an inactive RDC. The request must include:

- A. A completed “Functional Classification Change Request” form which includes:
  1. Road name, beginning point and ending point of request
  2. Total mileage of the road segment
  3. Current and proposed functional classification
  4. Written description of the road segment
  5. Reason for the change in classification. This is to include the conditions that have changed (traffic patterns, etc.)
  6. Comments on the impact the change will have on the classification percentages in the jurisdiction and a plan for maintaining the required balance.
  7. Documentation of the initiating agency’s approval for the submittal (Council or Board action, or confirmation of delegated authority)
- B. A map identifying the proposed segment change and showing the functional classification of surrounding or connecting roads.

The Metropolitan Council uses its own form, which includes an area for MnDOT review.

**Step 2** RDC/MPO reviews proposed changes for conformance to the FHWA Functional Classification Guidelines. If the requested change abuts an RDC/MPO boundary, the RDC/MPO will coordinate with the adjacent planning authority and local jurisdictions (county/city) to ensure urban/rural continuity.

If approved, the representatives of the RDC/MPO board sign and date the Functional Classification Change form.

MnDOT Metro District will review and comment on Metropolitan Council changes before the changes go through the committee approval process.

**Step 3** RDC/MPO forwards the Functional Classification Change Form and the map provided by the requesting agency to the District for review:

- State Aid routes: send to the District State Aid Engineer.
- Non-state-aid-eligible routes: send to the District Planner.

**Step 4** Greater Minnesota: After discussing the request with the RDC/MPO (Step 3), the District Planner/ District State Aid Engineer signs the form and communicates the change. The District scans the signed document to PDF format and emails the PDF file(s) to:

1. City/County who initiated the request
2. RDC and/or MPO
3. MnDOT County State Aid Needs Manager, Kim DeLaRosa, [Kimberlie.delarosa@state.mn.us](mailto:Kimberlie.delarosa@state.mn.us), the Functional Classification Change contact in the Office of State Aid

The MnDOT County State Aid Needs Manager makes the appropriate updates, files the documents in MnDOT's electronic document management system (eDOCS), and notifies the MnDOT Transportation Data and Analysis (TDA) unit of the accepted functional classification change and location of records. TDA updates the LRS.

Metropolitan Council: The Metropolitan Council will send the accepted change request forms and a GIS shapefile of the changes to the two responsible Metro District Planners (currently Michael Corbett ([michael.j.corbett@state.mn.us](mailto:michael.j.corbett@state.mn.us)) and Paul Czech ([paul.czech@state.mn.us](mailto:paul.czech@state.mn.us)), and TDA's TIS/GIS Unit Supervisor, Jesse Pearson ([jesse.pearson@state.mn.us](mailto:jesse.pearson@state.mn.us)). The Metro District Planners will route the changes to the MnDOT State Aid contact. The TDA staff will use the shapefile to assist in updating the LRS.