

# ***WEST VIRGINIA HIGHWAYS***

## **Classification Systems, Characteristics and Usage**

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### **National Highway Functional Classification System**

Highway functional classification is the grouping of roads, streets, and highways into systems of similar characteristics based primarily on the length of trips served. Additionally, functional classification defines the role that a particular road or street plays in serving the flow of trips through a highway network and analyzes the services provided or that should be provided by each highway facility in serving the two principal functions of a highway: mobility and access. Two nationwide studies of highway functional classification were conducted during the period 1969-1971. The first study required the functional classification of existing (1968) highways, while the second study used the same functional classes and basic functional criteria as the first study, but provided for the classification to be based on projected 1990 facilities and usage. The Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 required the use of functional highway classification to update and modify the federal-aid highway systems by July 1, 1976. This legislative requirement is still in effect and the National Highway Functional Classification System has been in use since that time (See Table 2.3 and Figure 2.2).

**TABLE 2.3**  
**West Virginia Highways: National Highway Functional Classification System**  
*As of June 30, 2000*

<b>NATIONAL HIGHWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM</b>	<b>STATE HIGHWAY MILEAGE</b>	<b>PERCENT OF TOTAL</b>
Urban Principal Arterial System		
Interstate (including the WV Turnpike)	97.16	0.25%
Other Freeways and Expressways	9.37	0.02%
Other Principal Arterials	203.88	0.53%
Urban Minor Arterial System	419.65	1.10%
Urban Collector System	445.99	1.17%
Urban Local System	1,716.95	4.49%
	<b>2,893.00</b>	<b>7.56%</b>

<b>Subtotal: Urban System</b>		
Rural Principal Arterial System		
Interstate (including the WV Turnpike)	457.43	1.20%
Other Principal Arterials	1,078.44	2.82%
Rural Minor Arterial System	1,534.60	4.01%
Rural Major Collector System	6,017.84	15.72%
Rural Minor Collector System	2,333.65	6.09%
Rural Local System	23,966.04	62.60%
<b>Subtotal: Rural System</b>		
	<b>35,388.00</b>	<b>92.44%</b>
<b>TOTAL: Urban and Rural Systems</b>		
	<b>38,281.00</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

SOURCE: West Virginia Department of Transportation, Planning and Research Division, Roadway Records and Statistics Section. PR528 – *Summary of Existing State and Local Roads and Streets Mileage Report HW2395A*. Charleston, WV:2000. (Includes Federal, State and Municipal mileage.)

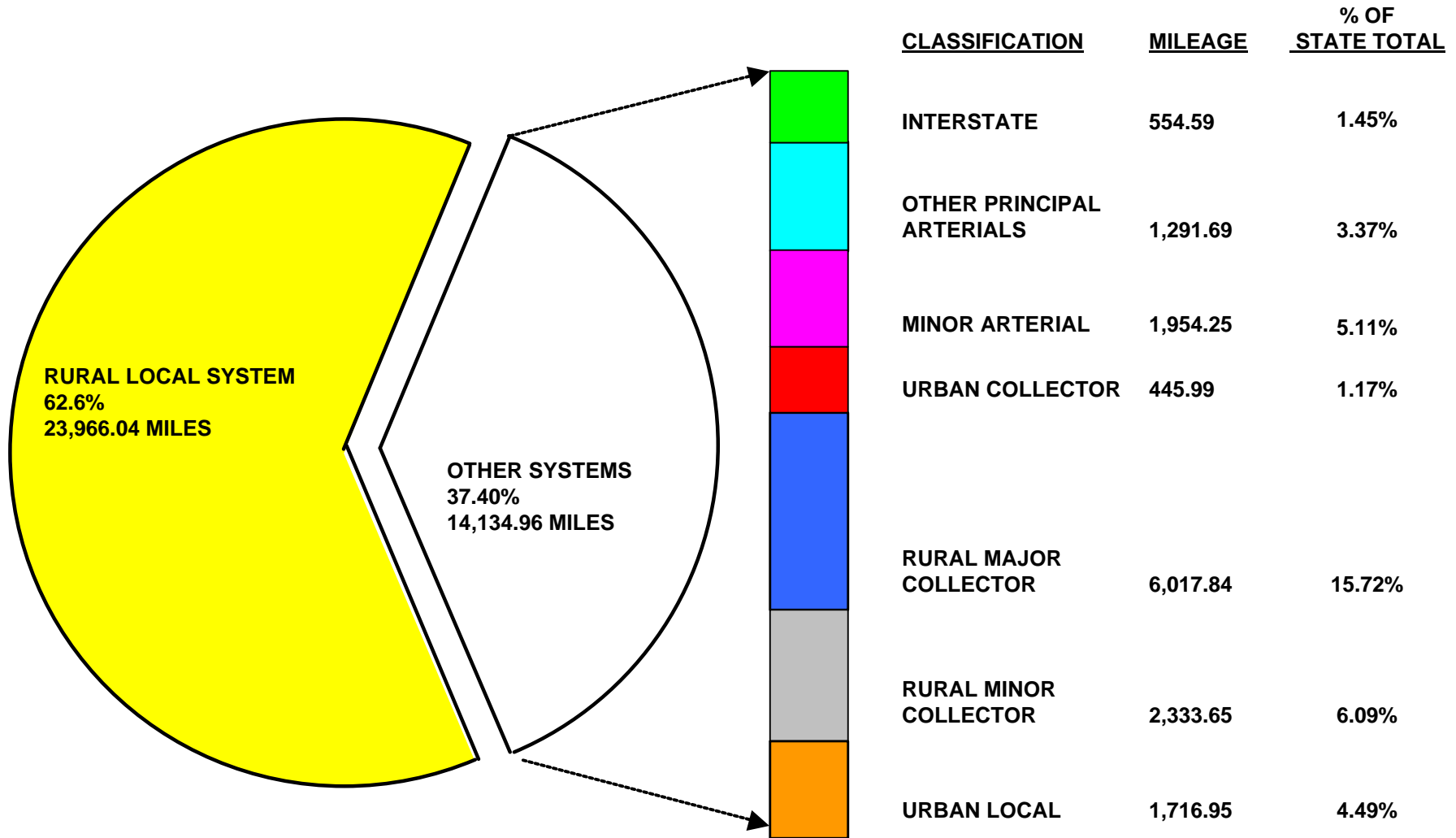
The functional systems used within this classification are Arterial highways (principal and minor), which generally handle long trips; Collector facilities (major and minor), which collect and disperse traffic between the arterials and the lower level; and Local roads and streets, which serve the land access function. These systems may be divided into rural and urban area classifications and are further described as follows:

- **Urban Principal Arterial System** – serves the major centers of activity of a metropolitan area, the highest traffic volume corridors, the majority of both the trips entering and leaving an urban area, and the through movements to bypass the central city; carries intra-urban and inter-city bus travel, travel between major inner city communities, between central business districts; includes almost all fully- and partially-controlled access facilities; stratified into three subsystems:
  - *Interstate* – multi-lane routes with access fully controlled, which serve the national defense and connect the nation’s principal metropolitan areas
  - *Other Freeways and Expressways* – non-Interstate Principal Arterials with access fully controlled
  - *Other Principal Arterials* – arterial routes with no control of access
  
- **Urban Minor Arterial System** – interconnects with and augments the urban Principal Arterial system; provides service to trips of moderate length; distributes travel to geographic areas smaller than those identified with the higher system; contains

facilities that place more emphasis on land access than the higher system; and offer a lower level of traffic mobility

- **Urban Collector System** – provides both land access service and traffic circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial and industrial areas
- **Urban Local System** – provides direct access to abutting land and access to the higher order systems; offers lowest level of mobility and usually contains no bus routes; service to through traffic movement usually is deliberately discouraged
- **Rural Principal Arterial System** – connected network of continuous routes that serve corridor movements having trip length and travel density characteristics indicative of substantial intrastate or interstate travel, stratified into two subsystems:
  - *Interstate* – all designated routes of the Interstate System
  - *Other Principal Arterials* – all non-Interstate principal arterials
- **Rural Minor Arterial System** – link cities and larger towns (and other travel generators, e.g., resort areas, that are capable of attracting travel over similarly long distances) and form an integrated network providing interstate and inter-county service
- **Rural Collector System** – primarily serve intra-county travel and constitute those routes on which predominant travel distances are shorter than on arterial routes, sub-classified into two subsystems:
  - *Major Collector* – provide service to any county seat or larger town not on an arterial route and to other traffic generators of equivalent intra-county importance, e.g., schools, county parks, etc.
  - *Minor Collector*—provide service to smaller communities not on an arterial route and collect traffic from local roads and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of a collector road
- **Rural Local System** – provides access to adjacent or abutting lands and provides service to travel over relatively short distances.

Figure 2.2  
**West Virginia Highways by National Highway Functional Classification System  
 As of June 30, 2000**



**SOURCE:** West Virginia Department of Transportation, Planning and Research Division, Traffic Analysis Section. West Virginia Traffic Count File summary Tables. Charleston, WV:2000. (Includes all Federal, State and Municipal mileage)