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Department of Transportation

URBAN BOUNDARIES AND FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF ROADWAYS

PURPOSE:

This procedure sets forth the procedures and responsibilities for designating urban boundaries and determining federal functional classification designations for all public roads. The criteria used for the decennial urban census boundary designation and functional classification assignment are the same for interim changes. Urban boundaries define the extent of the geographic area determined to be urban. The functional classification designation depends upon the function of the road and determines the federal-aid system assignments. Adjustments to the census urban boundary and changes to the functional classification require Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approval.

AUTHORITY:

Sections 20.23(3)(a) and 334.048(3), Florida Statutes (F.S.)

REFERENCES:

- [Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Urban Area Criteria for Census 2010, Federal Register/Volume 76, No. 164/Wednesday, August 24, 2011 Notice](#)
- FHWA's Office of Highway Policy Information's Highway Functional Classification Concepts, Criteria and Procedures, 2013: [PDF](#) | [Web](#)
- Florida Department of Transportation Urban Boundary and Functional Classification Handbook; This handbook is published by and available from the Florida Department of Transportation, TDA Office, 605 Suwannee Street, Mail Station 27, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450. It should be used in conjunction with this Procedure: [PDF](#) | [Web](#)

- Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Program Management Handbook: This handbook is published by and available from the Florida Department of Transportation, Office of Policy Planning, 605 Suwannee Street, Mail Station 28, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450: [PDF](#) | [Web](#)
- Title 23, “Metropolitan Transportation Planning”, United States Code, Section 134: [Web](#); Title 23, “Urban Area Boundaries and Highway Functional Classification” Code of Federal Regulations, Section 470.105: [Web](#); Title XXVI, “Public Transportation” United States Code, Section 0415, “Public Road Jurisdiction and Transfer Process”: [Web](#).
- The Florida Department of Transportation’s Forecasting and Trends Office is responsible for the Urban Boundary requirements and the [Transportation Data and Analytics Office](#) is responsible for the Functional Classification requirements outlined within this procedure.

SCOPE:

For the purpose of implementing the requirements of this procedure in the Department of Transportation (Department) District Offices, the responsible position of authority is the District Director of Systems/Transportation Development. The District Director of Transportation Development may accomplish the procedural requirements utilizing District resources as determined by the District.

The principal users of this procedure in the District are the Planning, Maintenance, Environmental Management, and Traffic Operations Offices. The principal users in the Central Office are: Transportation Data and Analytics (TDA), Forecasting and Trends Office (FTO), Policy Planning, Outdoor Advertising, Safety, Work Program, and Budget Offices. Outside the Department the principal users are the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), local governments and FHWA.

BACKGROUND:

The use of the state functional classification to determine the jurisdiction of public roads was eliminated when **Section 335.04, F.S.**, was repealed effective July 1, 1995. Jurisdiction is now based on mutual agreement between the Department and the local governmental entity, pursuant to [Section 335.0415, F.S.](#) Functional classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Federal functional classification and urban boundaries are still required by FHWA and must be thoroughly reviewed and updated every ten years, after the decennial census.

1. GENERAL

Functional classification in urbanized areas should be developed within the framework of the continuing, comprehensive, and cooperative planning process carried out pursuant to **Section 134, F.S.**

The FHWA Highway Functional Classification concepts, criteria and procedures released in 2013 provide that states have the option of using Census-defined boundaries as defined by the Census Bureau, or they may adjust the Census-defined boundaries to be more consistent with transportation needs. These boundaries delineate areas as rural or urban. Rural and urban categories are used by the Department in the determination of functional classification, level of service, application of access management standards, and distance between interchanges.

1.1 CENSUS DESIGNATED URBAN BOUNDARY

The Bureau of the Census determined that the 2010 census designated urban boundary begins with identification of initial urban cores based on census tract and block population density, count, and size thresholds. The census block is one of the key factors in the selection of areas considered as urban. A census block is an area normally bounded by visible features such as streets, streams, and railroads, and by non-visible features, such as the boundary of an incorporated place, minor civil division, county, or other 2010 census tabulation entity.

1.2 FHWA ADJUSTED CENSUS URBAN AREA BOUNDARY

FHWA allows the adjustment of urban area boundaries by the states. This allows a state the ability to adjust the urban boundary in a manner that provides increased funding flexibility to various federal-aid highway and transit programs. An adjusted boundary cannot be inside the Census boundary. Details on adjusting the urban boundaries are found in TDA's [Urban Boundary and Functional Classification Handbook \(Handbook\)](#). The adjusted urban area boundaries require coordination between the Department, local governments, and the MPOs with final approval from FHWA. The FHWA adjusted census urban area boundaries are not related to the 20-year MPO boundary.

1.3 FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

The principal purpose of roadway classification is to establish the relative importance of a roadway in the overall hierarchy of roadways. Details on classifying roads are found in the [Urban Boundary and Functional Classification Handbook \(Handbook\)](#).

2. DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1 OVERVIEW

Each District has the responsibility to propose boundary adjustments and federal functional classification designations, in cooperation with local officials. The District must coordinate with adjacent district offices to ensure the continuity of classifications across district lines. The District will draft maps, and prepare all necessary supporting documentation for urban boundary adjustments and functional classification

designations. Proposals will then be reviewed by the TDA Office prior to submittal to FHWA for approval. If a proposal is approved by FHWA, the District will prepare final maps and update the supporting documents. The District will have the local entity and/or the MPO, and the District Director of Transportation Development, or other District senior manager as determined by the District Secretary, sign the maps. The maps will be sent to the TDA Office for submittal to FHWA for signature. Once the final maps have all the signatures affixed, the District will distribute copies of the final maps. The District will update the related Roadway Characteristics Inventory (RCI) features, and notify the TDA Office to change feature 112, Federal Aid Highway System (FAHWYSYS).

2.2 DISTRICT RESPONSIBILITIES FOR PROPOSALS

The District will make functional classification recommendations to the appropriate local officials in a workshop or other public setting. For convenience, functional classification coordination can occur at the same time as the boundary discussions. Boundary maps can be used for the functional classification work maps. The base map should be prepared in a geographic information system (GIS) format. The TDA Office will work with the Districts to create the base maps.

2.2.1 COORDINATION OF URBAN BOUNDARIES ADJUSTMENT

2.2.1.1 The District will discuss the designation of urban boundaries with local officials at the workshop to begin the process of reaching consensus on the boundary adjustments.

2.2.1.2 After the proposed boundary for each urban area is agreed to by the Department and the MPO or local government, the District will illustrate the proposed boundary on the draft boundary maps and submit the maps to FTO for review. The District should submit the draft maps for each area as it is completed to expedite the process. FTO will review the boundary maps and submit them to FHWA for approval. If there are concerns, the District will coordinate with the local officials to rectify any conflicts. The revised boundary maps will be resubmitted to FHWA.

2.2.1.3 After FHWA has approved the proposed boundary, the District will be notified and the District will prepare final boundary maps for signature. Final boundary maps will be signed by the local officials as directed in **Section 2.3.1**.

2.2.2 COORDINATION FOR FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION DESIGNATION

2.2.2.1 At a minimum, each review of federal functional classification shall include at least one workshop session can be combined with the boundary workshop, with local governments in each county of the state. The workshop

session should review road function and provide a forum for the discussion of relevant topics. Subsequent workshop sessions, if necessary, should examine the changes made following comments and discussions at the previous session. Urbanized areas are reviewed by the MPO. An urbanized area with multiple MPOs will be reviewed by each MPO. Incorporated urban areas are reviewed by the respective municipality and if a portion of the area extends outside the municipal limits, also the county. Unincorporated urban areas are reviewed by the county. Rural areas lying outside the urbanized areas and the urban areas are reviewed by the county.

2.2.2.2 When the Department, along with a local government or a MPO, have met and agree that road functions may have changed, the Department shall contact affected governmental entities that were not present at the meeting. The Department shall advise the entities of the functional classification changes being considered, including changes that will affect the eligibility of a road for federal-aid. If there is any disagreement, the involved parties will work cooperatively to resolve the functional classification issues.

2.2.2.3 The process described in this [Procedure](#) and Handbook is one of cooperation and consensus building between the Department, local governments, MPOs and FHWA. If this process is followed, no formal appeal process should be needed. If disagreement does occur, FHWA will be the final arbitrator. Within urbanized areas, the MPO will serve as the lead agency for reaching a consensus opinion on the classification of roads located within the area it covers. For urban areas and rural areas, the District will obtain local acceptance of the proposed functional classification from the local governments. The District will document the functional classification coordination using the minutes from the workshop or by correspondence received from local officials.

2.2.3 ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES FOR FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION

The District will perform the following actions after obtaining local acceptance of the functional classification for a roadway.

2.2.3.1 Using the boundary maps, show the current functional classification, and at a minimum, the additional roads and streets proposed for functional classification, the roadway IDs, and road numbers/local names. Illustrate District and local government recommended functional classification changes and additions on the maps. Maintain route continuity with abutting counties and Districts.

2.2.3.2 After boundary approval is received, prepare the preliminary functional classification package for submittal to the TDA Office for review. The preliminary functional classification package of information will contain:

- [Application for Functional Classification change](#)
 - Evidence of coordination with the affected governmental entities via a

signature within the [Functional Classification application](#).

- Color-coded maps depicting the approved boundaries, and current and proposed functional classification.
- Functional classification written narrative descriptions, and percentage tabulations.

2.2.3.3 RCI feature 121 contains a characteristic for proposed functional classification (PROFUNCL). When the District and the local officials agree on a functional classification revision, begin populating the proposed functional classification only in PROFUNCL. See [Urban Boundary and Functional Classification Handbook \(Handbook\)](#) for details.

2.3 DISTRICT FINALIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES

The involved parties shall confirm that the map or maps accurately reflect the decisions made for the functional classification of the identified roadway(s). After FHWA approves the functional classification designations, the District will prepare final maps as described in the [Urban Boundary and Functional Classification Handbook \(Handbook\)](#).

2.3.1 The District shall coordinate the following official signatures on the final maps:

2.3.1.1 County maps and unincorporated urban area maps shall be signed by the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, or another authorized representative of the county.

2.3.1.2 Incorporated urban area maps shall be signed by the Mayor, or other authorized representative of the city and if they extend beyond the municipal limits, the Chairman of the Board of County Commissioners, or another authorized representative of the county. This does not include urban areas within a MPO planning area boundary.

2.3.1.3 FHWA urbanized area maps shall be signed by the Chairman of the MPO, or other authorized representative of the MPO, for all areas within the MPO planning area boundary. For urbanized areas with multiple MPOs, the Chairman of each MPO, or other authorized representative of the MPOs, will sign the maps.

2.3.1.4 All maps shall be signed by the Department's District Director of Transportation Development, or other District senior manager as determined by the District Secretary, and FHWA.

2.3.2 The District will finalize the written descriptions and functional classification tabulations showing the extent of functional classification on a District-wide scale.

2.3.3 The District will prepare the final package for submittal to FHWA, which will consist of the following items:

- 2.3.3.1** [Functional Classification application](#) for addition/deletion of mileage.
- 2.3.3.2** Signed county, urban area, and urbanized area functional classification maps.
- 2.3.3.3** Final written descriptions and the functional classification tabulations, addition/deletion of mileage, showing the extent of functional classification on a District-wide scale.

2.4 DISTRICT DISTRIBUTION RESPONSIBILITIES

Once the final documents have been approved by FHWA and received by the District, District staff will perform the following tasks in a timely manner:

- 2.4.1** Send the final written descriptions to the local governments and/or MPOs.
- 2.4.2** Provide a complete set of signed maps to the local governments and/or MPOs.
- 2.4.3** Provide a complete set of maps to the Outdoor Advertising Office, the District Rail Coordinator/Administrator, and the District Maintenance Office/District Planning Office as appropriate for RCI data collection. Distribute copies of the maps to other offices within the District as appropriate.
- 2.4.4** Update general interest data features in RCI. This includes any

remaining feature 121, proposed functional classification (PROFUNCL) and feature 124, highway location codes (HWYLOCAL).

3. TDA RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 PROPOSAL REVIEW RESPONSIBILITIES

- 3.1.1** The TDA Office will conduct a review of the data in the preliminary review package, and provide comments and assistance to the Districts as needed.
- 3.1.2** After all issues are resolved, the TDA Office will submit the preliminary approval package to the FHWA Division Office for its review and comment.

It is the responsibility of the FHWA Division Office to approve any changes in the classification of highways. If a state proposes major changes to the principal arterial system, the highest functional classification, the FHWA Division Office may submit those proposals for higher level review in Washington.

- 3.1.3** The TDA Office will work with the District to resolve any FHWA questions or concerns.
- 3.1.4** The TDA Office can use the roadway ID and milepoint information

obtained by the Districts to prepare the statewide percentage tabulations for addition/deletion of mileage.

3.1.5 After FHWA gives final approval for the urban area boundaries and roadway functional classification(s), the District will send maps, signed by the District and the appropriate local officials, to the TDA Office. The TDA Office will transmit these maps to FHWA for signature.

3.1.6 After all signatures are finalized, the TDA Office will update the RCI feature 121 characteristic for functional classification (FUNCLASS) with the new data from proposed functional classification (PROFUNCL), and the information in PROFUNCL will be deleted. The TDA Office will update feature 112, characteristic for type of federal aid highway system (FAHWYSYS).

3.2 DISTRIBUTION AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The TDA Office must retain one original of each functional classification map and make and distribute copies of the other maps as follows:

3.2.1 Send one copy of each signed functional classification and urban boundary map to the following offices:

- FHWA, Tallahassee
- Federal Aid Office (Central Office)
- Safety Office (Central Office)
- Right of Way Office, boundary changes only (Central Office)
- Outdoor Advertising Office (Central Office)
- Rail Office (Central Office)

3.2.2 Compile the narrative descriptions submitted by the District and send one copy of the statewide compilation to each of the following offices:

- FHWA, Tallahassee
- Federal Aid Office (Central Office)

3.2.3 Compile the functional classification percentage tabulation tables and send one copy of the statewide compilation to FHWA and one copy to each District Director of Transportation Development.

3.2.4 Obtain and retain the boundary and functional classification approval letter from FHWA. Send a copy to each appropriate District.

4. URBAN BOUNDARY AND FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION HANDBOOK

The [Urban Boundary and Functional Classification Handbook \(Handbook\)](#) provides guidance, sample letters and forms, and background material to follow when coordinating the functional classification of roads with local governments and MPOs. The users of the [Urban Boundary and Functional Classification Handbook \(Handbook\)](#) will be the same as the users of this [Procedure](#). The [Urban Boundary and Functional Classification Handbook \(Handbook\)](#) is available from the TDA website at: [PDF](#) | [Web](#)

5. TRAINING

Training is not required, but technical support will be provided by the TDA Office if requested.

6. FORMS

None