

Street Classifications Explained

The connectivity of a street network can affect public safety and the success of the economy. If it is too difficult to access a property, whether it is because traffic volumes slow down traffic movement or if there are too many conflicts at the access point, it may result in the location being an unsuccessful one for business or other uses. Having suitable access for first responders is also extremely important.



Different types of land use result in a certain number of “trips”. For example, a residential use will generate a different number of trips per day than a 60,000 square foot grocery store. Street design should meet the adjacent land uses. Local streets are typically the streets that provide direct access to a property, and then local streets feed into collector streets and ultimately arterial streets.

See below for more detail on the various classifications of our Cortez streets. Note that the City’s design standards address the requirements for pavement width, thickness, and subgrade preparation.

Local Streets:

The main purpose of a local street is to provide direct access to properties. Local streets can be a part of the design of a neighborhood, for example, through curved vs straight alignment of the street, landscaping, and building siting, and by providing space between structures. Local streets also serve to provide on street parking, sometimes primary parking. The typical right of way width of a local street is between 50 and 65 feet.. Wider local streets may be found in heavy commercial and industrial areas to accommodate truck traffic associated with those uses. Local streets should connect to collector streets and not directly to arterials if possible. Texas Street is an example of a local street.



Texas Street- looking north.

Collector:

A collector street gathers traffic from local streets, usually residential local streets, and serves local activities such as schools and shopping centers, or transfers traffic to arterial streets. They are not intended for direct access to a lot and therefore driveways connecting directly to a collector should be discouraged, as should parking on the collector street. Right of way width will be between 60 and 80 feet. Montezuma Avenue is an example of a collector street.

Montezuma Avenue looking west near Montezuma Park



Arterials:

Mildred Road looking North towards the Hospital



Arterial streets are intended to provide traffic flow for longer trips across an area. While arterials will provide direct access to individual lots, it is not ideal and can create conflicts. Typical arterial ROW widths range from 60 feet to 100 or more feet. Mildred Road is an example of an arterial street.

Highways:

There are highways located within City limits, HW 145, HW 160, and HW 491. Highway rights of way and design criteria under the jurisdiction of the Colorado Department of Transportation.