

Highway Classifications

Introduction

Minor Roads

- ☐ [Service](#)
- ☐ [Residential:](#)
- ☐ [Unclassified](#)
- ☐ [Tertiary](#)

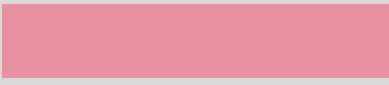
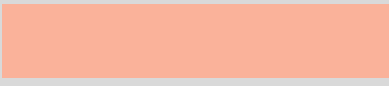

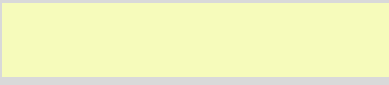
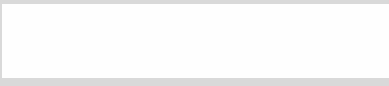

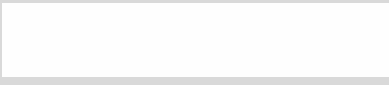

Major Roads

- ☐ [Secondary](#)
- ☐ [Primary](#)
- ☐ [Trunk](#)
- ☐ [Motorway](#)

Introduction

Highways are one of the most fundamental and common class of objects found in OSM. When editing OSM you will inevitably encounter them and you have to know the various classifications for either context or to meet community standards when directly editing them yourself.

Summary:

Name	Purpose	Display Color
Motorway	Most important national highways	
Trunk	Less important national highways	
Primary	Connecting large settlements	
Secondary	Connecting medium settlements	
Tertiary	Connecting small settlements	
Unclassified	Connecting isolated residential areas	
Residential	Providing access <i>through</i> residential neighborhoods	
Service	Providing access to places of interest	

Note: *Tertiary, Unclassified, Residential, and Service highways all render as white although the width of the line does decrease with a lower classification. Unclassified and Residential however show up as both the same color and the same width.*

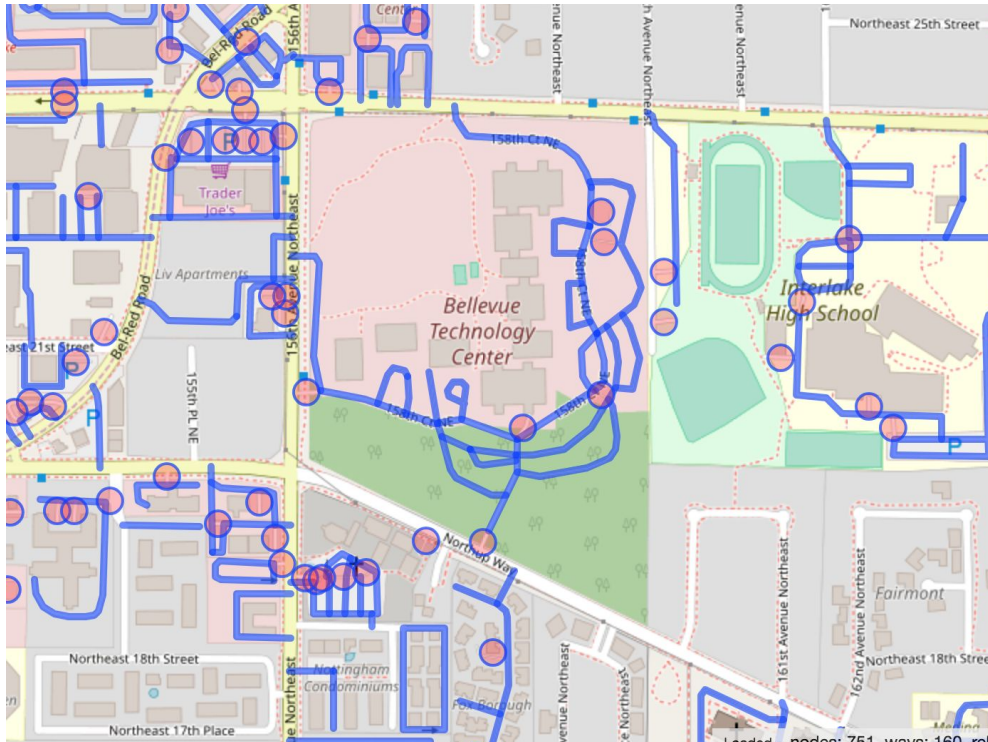
Guidelines

- Don't worry about memorizing all eight types, but rather focus on learning the key characteristic of each one
- The key characteristics relate to road **function**
- Recognize that the classifications exist in a hierarchy
- When editing take into account what has already been modeled.

Minor Roads

Service

The key main characteristic here is access. A service road provides access to and is associated with a specific place of interest: school, stores, offices, apartments, parks, etc.

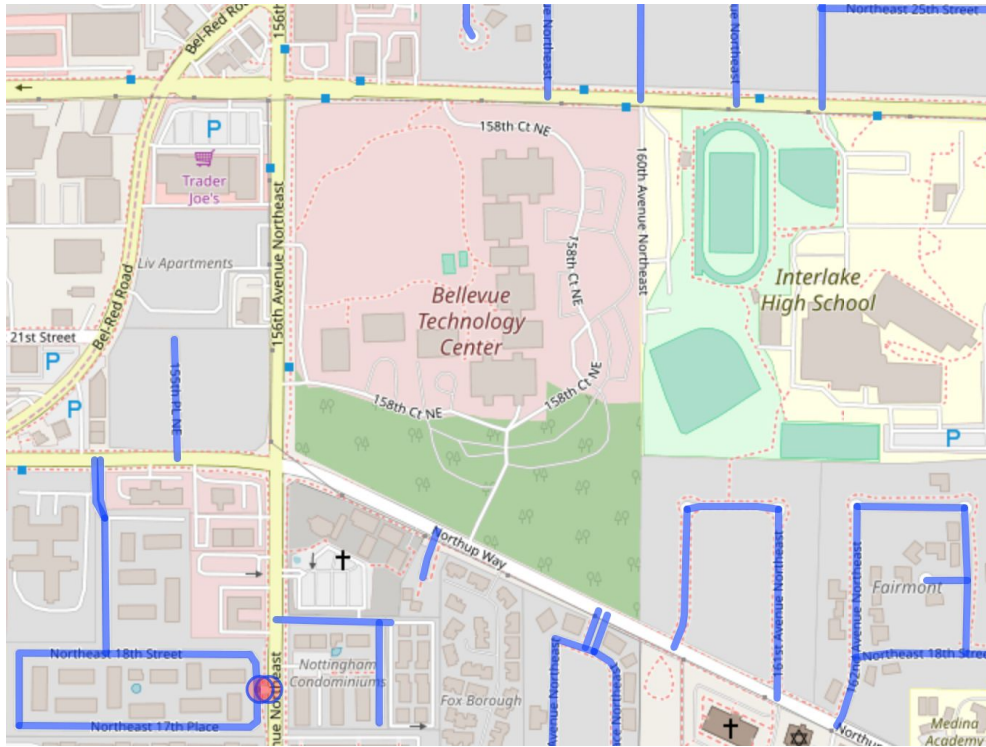


Note:

- Look how often they go through properties
- Look at how often they are related to parking lots

Residential:

Roads running through residential neighborhoods. They will be lined with homes.

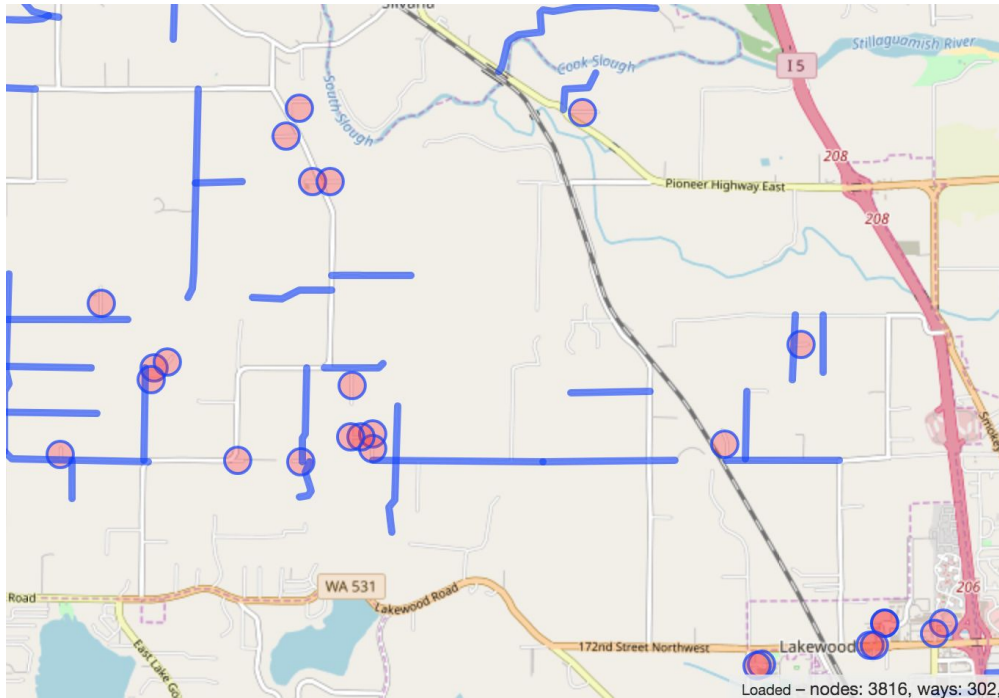


Note:

- The other white lines are service and tertiary

Unclassified

Minor public roads connecting residential areas, often but not always in rural areas.

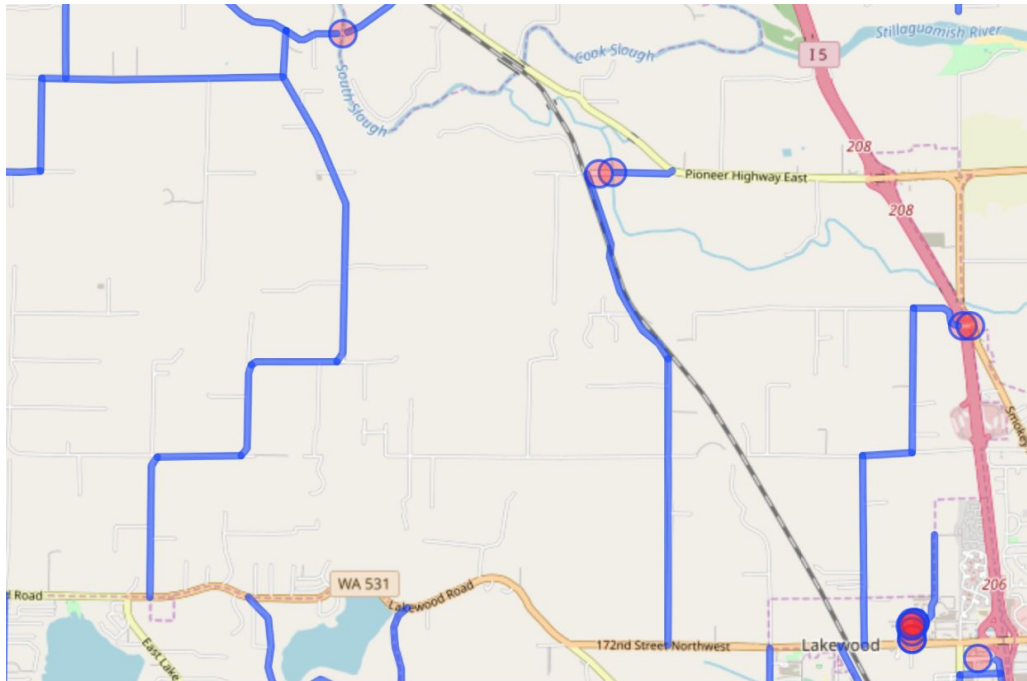


Note:

- I-5 is a motorway
- Pioneer Highway East is Secondary
- Lakewood Road is Primary
- Happy Valley Road and 3rd Ave NE are Tertiary
- The narrower white lines are a combination of residential and unclassified

Tertiary

Used for connecting smaller settlements (villages) or centers within a city or for connecting minor streets to major roads.



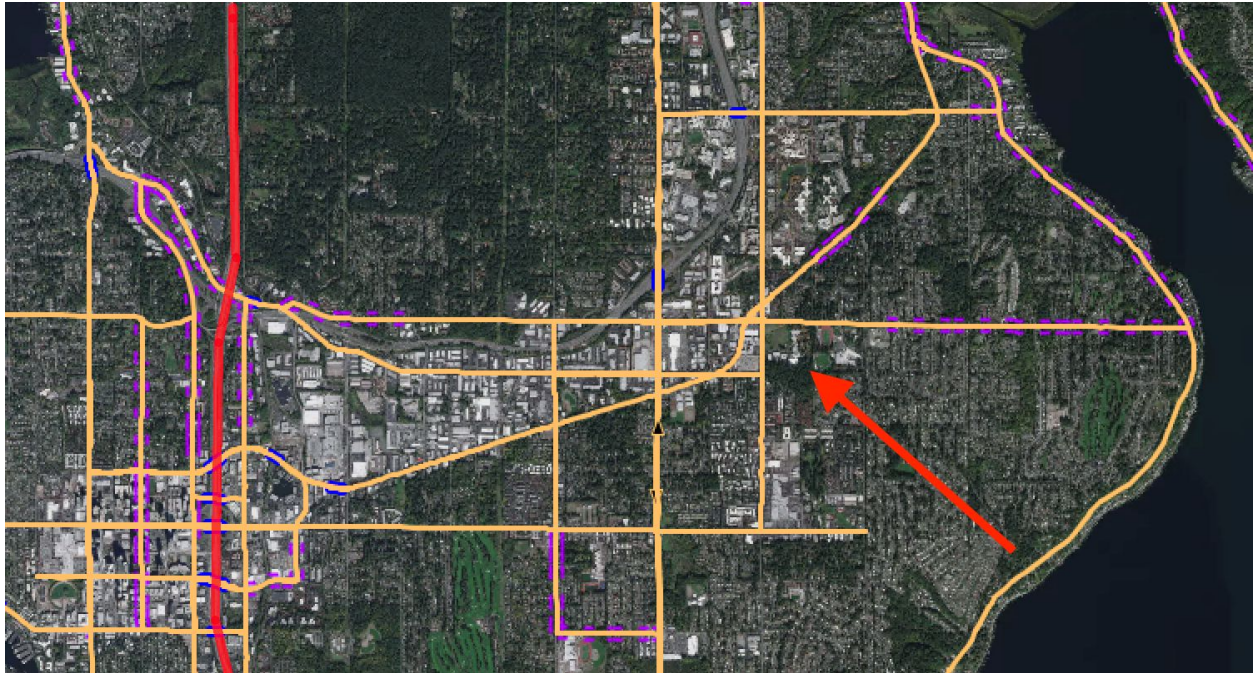
Note:

- Notice the length of the tertiary roads
- Notice how they are connecting the higher priority roads

Major Roads

Secondary

It does not form a *part* of the national network but does *link* up to it. Any avenue that spans an entire city or even just a substantial part of it and then links up to a major highway is likely to be secondary.

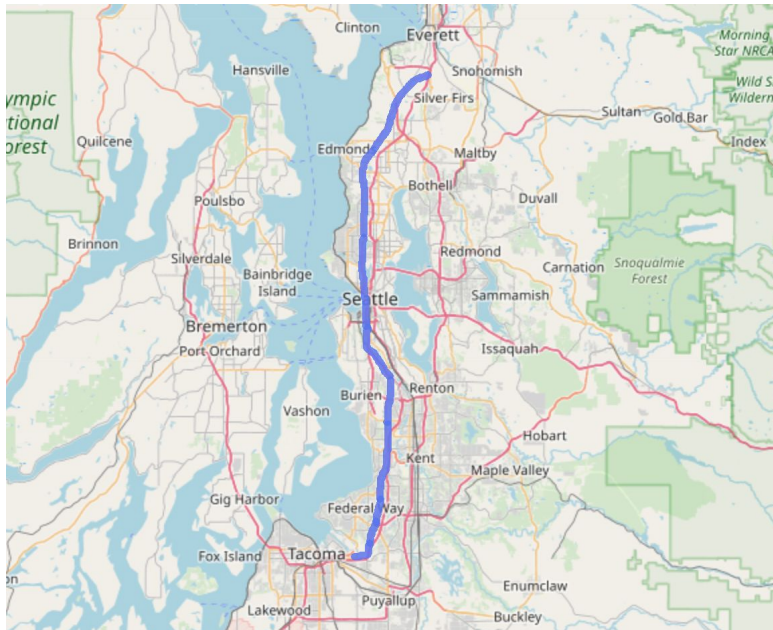


Note:

- The arrow points to the location of the office
- The red highlighted road is I-405
- If you commute through I-90 or I-405 consider the roads you're taking to get on to those highway

Primary

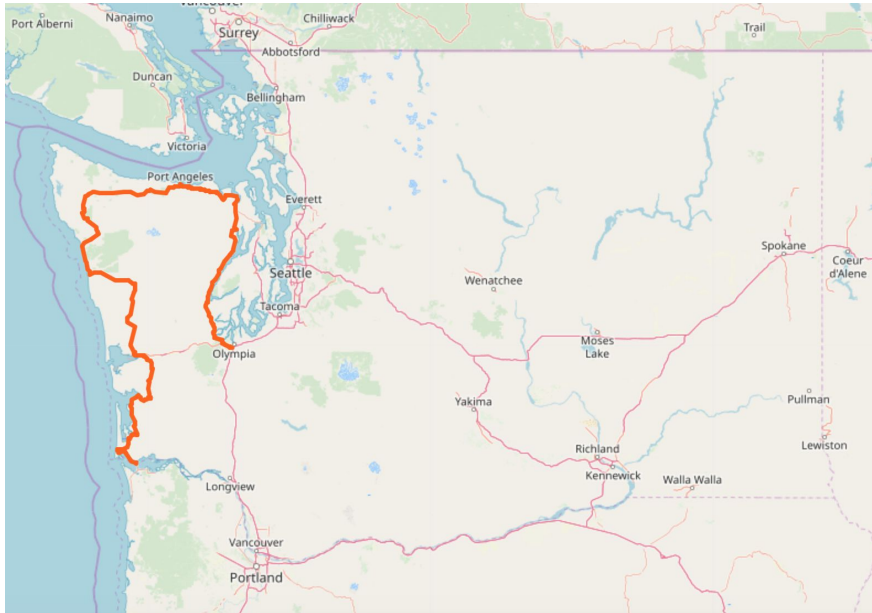
These will actually form part of the national highway system, but keep in mind that a highway may barely span the entire state let alone the nation. Those minor highways tend to be classified as primary.



Note: The highlighted route above is Highway 99.

Trunk

These are the middle category of national highways. Highways spanning a substantial length of a state are likely to end up in this category.



Note: At this stage in the OSM project the line between Trunk and Primary *is* likely to be blurred and cause disagreements. You will never however be told to reclassify a major highway. At this point it's simply not part of our relevant workflow.

Motorway

The most significant road classification possible, likely to span a substantial length of the entire nation.

