

FEMA Mitigation Funding Opportunity Building Code Improvements

Overview

- Building codes specify the minimum legal design and construction requirements for a given jurisdiction. Structural integrity, construction materials and fire protection are taken into consideration to safeguard the occupants of a building, and to protect the building's structure. The International Code Council (ICC) develops codes in collaboration with FEMA and other Federal, states, local and private authorities.
- Supporting the adoption and enforcement of building codes not only aides in protecting life and property but also increases disaster resilience. This allows individuals and families to rapidly recover, following a disaster, with minimal costs and enable the continuation of operations and essentials services.
- With wildfires as a major threat to the states of Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington, it's important that building and fire codes are in place and adhered to, to ensure the sustainability of residential and commercial structures. FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Assistance (HMA) has funding opportunities available to states, local and tribal governments to support building code activities.

Eligible Activities

Evaluate adoption and/or implementation of codes that reduce risk.

- Evaluate which code adoption and enforcement activities are best suited for the jurisdiction.
- Adopt building codes or develop building code requirements, including publication of those requirements related to land use, zoning, floodplain management, infrastructure, urban-wildland defensible space, or other area, that help make the community more resilient.

Enhance existing adopted codes to incorporate more current requirements or higher standards.

- Improve or modify current or existing building code requirements to reflect the latest code edition, exceed the latest code edition, or develop or modify building code-coordinated requirements, including publication of those requirements, related to land use, zoning, floodplain management, infrastructure, urban wildland defensible space, or other area, that help make the community more resilient.
- Enhance existing adopted codes and enforcement to incorporate more current requirements, higher standards, electronic permitting, online model code access, virtual inspection technology, and remote building codes administration.



FEMA

Develop professional workforce capabilities through technical assistance and training.

- Provide or pursue training, including individual certification courses (inspector, plans reviewer, certified floodplain manager, etc.) and training for both the public and private sectors.
- Develop planning, training, and exercises for post-disaster building code enforcement through the ICC's When Disaster Strike's Institute training course.

Post-Disaster Code enforcement

- Develop activities related to improving code enforcement (evaluate processes, implement an inspection program, improve Building Code Effectiveness Grading Schedule (BCEGS) score, improve Community Rating System (CRS) rating, etc.).
- Develop or acquire software and hardware, and associated training, to assist with plan reviews, permitting, inspections, and records retention.
- Purchase publications or obtain digital license or printing permissions of publications to support building code activities.
- Engage consulting services to support activities related to building codes Cover costs associated with building department accreditation.
- Conduct public awareness outreach activities related to new requirements.

Overall Complexity

Application	Environmental	Legal
Low	Low	Low

Application Requirements

- Must be a local government, Tribe, or Private Nonprofit (PNP*).
- Must have a FEMA approved Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMP).
- Must fulfill appropriate FEMA and Recipient application requirements including, scope of work, budget, schedule, etc.
- 25 percent non-federal match required (Under the BRIC program, small and impoverished communities are eligible for a 10 percent non-federal match).
- Must include narrative discussion of the benefits of the project (no formal benefit- cost analysis is required).
- Funding limits are set by FEMA and the Recipient.

* PNPs are eligible only under HMGP and are not required to have an HMP.

Environmental Requirements

Depending on the specific elements of each building code improvement, the applicable environmental and historic preservation (EHP) laws can differ. Given this, engagement with FEMA EHP is required on a project specific basis, such as compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA).