

# Alternate and Improved projects

## PURPOSE OF THIS PUBLICATION

To **inform** Subrecipients (Applicants) using Federal disaster recovery funds, of **options to build back smarter** when developing their projects.



## INTENDED AUDIENCE

This publication is intended for those **applying** for and/or **receiving** recovery funding grants through the **Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Assistance (PA)** program, which includes local and State government agencies, Federally recognized **Tribal governments** and eligible **private nonprofit (PNP)** organizations.

# Do you want options?

After a disaster, our focus is to return our **lives, businesses** and **communities** to what they were pre-disaster or pre-event. FEMA and the Governor's Office Of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness (GOHSEP) help Subrecipients (Applicants) respond to and recover from major disasters declared by the President through PA grants.

**Do you want to rebuild smarter – better, different, stronger? You have options.**

IF YOU ANSWERED **"YES"** TO THE ABOVE QUESTION . . .

## THERE IS GOOD NEWS!

The FEMA PA program allows you to use grant funding from disaster damages in ways that better meet your community's recovery needs.

You have **two (2)** options that may help you **better** utilize your project funding . . . an **Alternate** or an **Improved** project. [44 CFR 206.203(d) and PA Guide FEMA 322]



ALTERNATE PROJECT – USE FUNDS FROM OUTDATED STORM DAMAGED AIRPORT TO EXPAND A WASTE WATER TREATMENT FACILITY

## WHAT ARE A/I PROJECTS?

An **ALTERNATE** project is the use of your obligated grant funding for use on **other community needs or priorities**, such as:

[44 CFR 206.203(d)(2)]

- **Constructing new** public facilities.
- **Repairing** or **expanding** other public facilities.
- **Purchasing capital equipment** over \$5,000 (e.g. buses, backhoes, ambulances, police cars, fire trucks, etc.).
- Funding mitigation measures on **non-damaged** elements.

An **IMPROVED** project **restores** pre-disaster function and capacity of a damaged facility and further **enhances** the facility.

[44 CFR 206.203(d)(1)]

**Some examples include:**

- **Laying asphalt** on a gravel road.
- **Expanding a facility** such as two (2) bays to three (3) bays on a damaged fire house.
- **Adding a heliport** to a repaired hospital.
- **Upgrading** capital equipment such as replacing a 10 year-old bus with a new bus.

**NOTE: Incremental costs** – cost beyond returning a disaster-damaged eligible facility to its pre-disaster function and capacity – are funded by the Subrecipient (Applicant).

**Do not begin work on an Alternate or Improved Project until approval is received from the State and/or FEMA.**

To be eligible for the Alternate/Improved (A/I) funding option, your Project Worksheet (PW) must be for permanent work.

## PERMANENT WORK CATEGORIES

C  
D  
E  
F  
G

- Roads + Bridges
- Water Control Facilities
- Buildings + Equipment
- Utilities
- Parks + Recreational + Other

When reviewing your recovery needs, consider the following to decide which option [Alternate Project or Improved Project] may work best for you.

### ALTERNATE PROJECT

You should request an **Alternate Project** if:

- ✓ Your **damaged facility** is no longer needed by the community and you want to use the funding for a **different facility**.

EXAMPLE: Tearing down an administrative building to create a much needed water treatment plant.

- ✓ Your **damaged equipment** is no longer needed but the community needs **other equipment**.

EXAMPLE: Buy new ambulances instead of replacing damaged fire trucks.

- ✓ You want to **use funding** from damaged facilities or equipment to **restore** an existing facility, **build a new** or different facility, **purchase new** equipment or any combination.

EXAMPLE: Purchasing buses instead of rebuilding a facility.

### IMPROVED PROJECT

You should request an **Improved Project** if:

- ✓ You want to **increase** the **size** of the **facility**.

EXAMPLE: Adding a cafeteria or additional classrooms to a damaged school.

- ✓ You want to **move** a school or fire station due to **demographic changes**.

EXAMPLE: Move a fire station across town to better support an increased population.

- ✓ You want to **restore** or **rebuild** a damaged facility plus add **enhanced features** or materials.

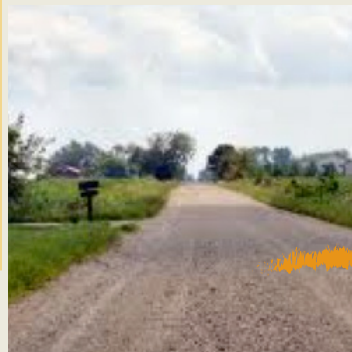
EXAMPLE: Adding solar panels to a restored facility; adding asphalt to a gravel road; rebuilding a damaged timber bridge with a concrete structure.



DAMAGED FACILITY



NEW BUSES



GRAVEL ROAD



ADDING ASPHALT

# Things you must know that will impact your A/I project selection

	Alternate	Improved
Authorized Funding	<p>For governmental entities, the amount of dollars available for your <b>Alternate Project</b> is equal to <b>90%</b> of the original obligated PW.</p> <p>For PNPs, the amount of dollars available for your Alternate Project is equal to <b>75%</b> of the original obligated PW.</p> <p>Insurance: You are not required to apply funds received from insurance on the original facility towards the Alternate Project.</p>	<p>All Subrecipients (Applicants) that request an <b>Improved Project</b> are <b>limited</b> to the obligated dollars stated in your <b>PW</b>.</p> <p>Funding for such projects is <b>limited</b> to the Federal share of the costs that would be associated with repairing or replacing the damaged facility to its pre-disaster design, or to the <b>actual costs</b> of completing the Improved Project, whichever is less.</p> <p>Insurance: You are required to apply funds received from insurance on the original facility towards the Improved Project.</p>
406 Hazard Mitigation (HM)	<p>If your original project contains funding for <b>406 HM</b>, those funds will <b>not</b> be <b>transferred</b> to the Alternate Project.</p>	<p>If your original facility was eligible for <b>repair</b>, FEMA may provide <b>406 HM funds</b> which transfer to the Improved Project.</p> <p><b>Replacement</b> and <b>relocated</b> facilities are not eligible for <b>406 HM</b> funds.</p>
Funding Usage	<p>Funds for an Alternate Project may <b>not</b> be used for <b>operating costs</b>.</p> <p>If you decide to build a <b>new facility</b> or <b>repair</b> a different facility, you must make the original facility <b>safe</b> and <b>secure</b>, or <b>sell</b> or <b>demolish</b> the facility.</p> <p>Funds for an Alternate Project <b>can be combined</b> with a grant from another Federal agency.</p> <p>Alternate Project funding <b>cannot</b> be used to meet the FEMA PA non-Federal <b>cost share</b>.</p>	<p>Funds for an Improved Project must be used to <b>restore</b> the facility to pre-disaster <b>function</b> and, at a minimum, pre-disaster <b>capacity</b>.</p> <p>Funds for an Improved Project <b>can</b> be <b>combined</b> with a grant from another Federal agency.</p>
Approvals	<p><b>PRIOR to beginning any construction on either an Alternate or Improved project, you must have FEMA's Environmental and Historic Preservation (EHP) review completed.</b></p>	

# So, what's next?

- ✓ **Review** your **Project Worksheets (PWs)**.
- ✓ **Determine** if you want to **rebuild** or **restore** in kind or consider something different.
- ✓ If considering **Alternate** or **Improved projects**, **identify** what you want to do.
- ✓ **Talk** to your GOHSEP **State Applicant Liaison (SAL)** to formulate an Alternate/Improved (A/I) project request and complete the *Special Projects Checklist*.
- ✓ **Submit a letter** to the **State Coordinating Officer (SCO)** along with the *Special Projects Checklist*. Your letter should include:
  - Which **original projects** you want to include.
  - Any **supporting documentation** for your proposed A/I project. Include **drawings, sketches, maps** and any other available **details** of your project plans.



ST. BERNARD IMPROVED PROJECT – CHANGING A ONE-STORY FIRE STATION TO A TWO-STORY FIRE STATION

## ACRONYMS

<b>A/I</b>	Alternate/Improved
<b>CFR</b>	Code of Federal Regulations
<b>EHP</b>	Environmental and Historic Preservation
<b>FEMA</b>	Federal Emergency Management Agency
<b>GOHSEP</b>	Governor's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Preparedness
<b>HM</b>	Hazard Mitigation
<b>PA</b>	Public Assistance
<b>PNP</b>	Private Nonprofit
<b>PW</b>	Project Worksheet
<b>SAL</b>	State Applicant Liaison
<b>SCO</b>	State Coordinating Officer

## REFERENCES

44 CFR

[http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=e1deb7aaa23bd920bbd362fe325adcf2&mc=true&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title44/44cfrv1\\_02.tpl#0](http://www.ecfr.gov/cgi-bin/text-idx?SID=e1deb7aaa23bd920bbd362fe325adcf2&mc=true&tpl=/ecfrbrowse/Title44/44cfrv1_02.tpl#0)

DAP 9525.13 - Alternate Projects  
[fema.gov/9500-series-policy-publications/952513-alternate-projects](http://fema.gov/9500-series-policy-publications/952513-alternate-projects)

FEMA 322 *Public Assistance Guide*  
[fema.gov/public-assistance-policy-and-guidance/public-assistance-guide](http://fema.gov/public-assistance-policy-and-guidance/public-assistance-guide)

FEMA P-323 *Public Assistance Applicant Handbook*  
[fema.gov/pdf/government/grant/pa/fema323\\_app\\_handbk.pdf](http://fema.gov/pdf/government/grant/pa/fema323_app_handbk.pdf)



**For more information or help with your A/I questions,  
contact GOHSEP at 225.925.7500**

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# Alternate/Improved (A/I) project checklist

1

ITEMS IN THE PACKAGE SHOULD FOLLOW THE ORDER OF THE CHECKLIST.

PROJECT TYPE

<input type="checkbox"/>	Alternate Project	<input type="checkbox"/>	Improved Project
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2

DISASTER

DR # \_\_\_\_\_

3

PROJECT/CONSTRUCTION DATA

Applicant Name \_\_\_\_\_

FIPS # \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed Project Address \_\_\_\_\_

Four (4) Corner Coordinates of the Proposed Project \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Request Letter to GOHSEP

List of donor Project Worksheet (PW) Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Vicinity map showing proposed location, disturbed areas, waterways and wetlands

Map or drawing showing existing footprint and proposed footprint

New Special Consideration Form (9 Questions) for A/I Project Request

New Scope of Work (SOW) for Proposed Project, including any available costs, plans, specifications, contracts, functional area square footage comparisons between damaged and proposed facilities, and additional information as requested by GOHSEP/FEMA

Explanation of all ground disturbing activities including maximum depth, if applicable (digging, excavation, structure removal, soil replacement, site work, access roads, staging areas)

4

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of all Federal and State environmental and regulatory permits and approvals and/or other relevant documentation (e.g., environmental site assessments or Phase I environmental baseline surveys or other environmental reports) (if applicable and available)*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Documentation of consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) and/or other relevant State and local agencies by Subrecipient (Applicant), State or FEMA personnel (if applicable and available)*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Projected construction project schedule (timeline) from approval to completion (if applicable)*
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of Project Worksheets (PWs) and applicable photos (clear pictures or digital format)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Copies of insurance settlement documents (particularly Statements of Loss), including adjuster estimate of damages

\*Information not required for equipment or contents projects

5

CONTACT (NAME/PHONE)	
<input type="checkbox"/>	State Applicant Liaison (SAL) _____
<input type="checkbox"/>	FEMA PA Coordinator (PAC) _____

