



# FEMA Update Newsletter

July 2018

This newsletter provides updates on policy, program, and regulatory changes related to resilience initiatives where the City of Columbia may seek external funds. It will allow Columbia to maintain an advanced state of readiness when it comes to securing, managing, and accounting for critical disaster funding.

## FEMA's 2018-2022 Strategic Plan

The new [FEMA Strategic Plan](#) was created using input from FEMA employees and multiple external sources including state, local, tribal and territorial governments, non-government agencies and the private sector. The three Strategic Goals developed are:

### To Build a Culture of Preparedness

The focus of this goal is FEMA's plan to invest in programs and strategies that help agencies and the people that they serve prepare for disasters. By increasing disaster mitigation resources, closing the insurance gap, and using lessons learned from previous disasters to improve

policies and processes, FEMA can guide the nation to a culture of proactive planning rather than reactive scrambling. Columbia can follow FEMA's lead: through proactive planning and regular updates offered by City Departments as well as consultant partners, the agency as a whole will be better positioned in advance of hazardous events.



## Hurricane Surge

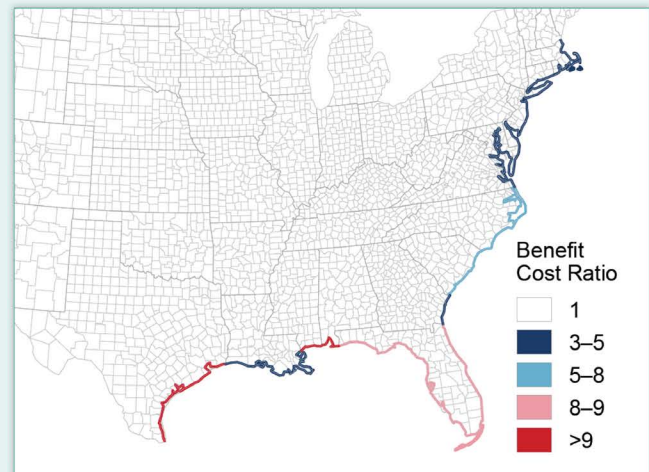
# \$7:1

Beyond Code Requirements

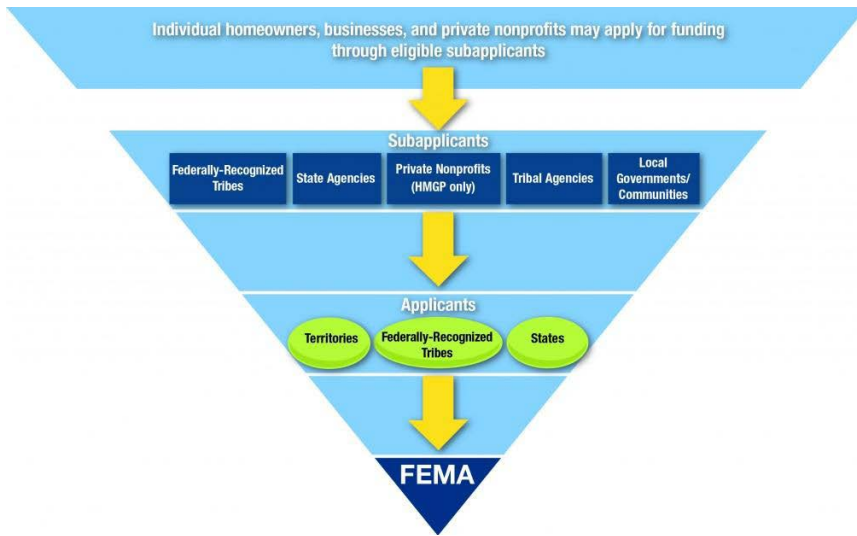
TOO FEW GRANTS TO PROVIDE STATISTICAL VALUE

Federally-Funded

Disaster resilience for floods in this study can be achieved by building new buildings higher above the 100-year flood elevation.



FEMA Hurricane Surge | Mitigation Saves Infographic (Source: David Javier, FEMA)



FEMA PDM flowchart (Source: FEMA)

## To Ready the Nation for Catastrophic Disasters

This goal addresses FEMA's intent to not only create a culture of pre-

paredness, but also be ready to execute, in the event of a disaster. The FEMA definition of a catastrophic disaster is an event requiring fund-

ing in excess of \$7.5M. [A recent study](#), conducted by the Union of Concerned Scientists (UCS), found that the accelerating sea level rise, primarily driven by climate change, is projected to worsen tidal flooding in the U.S.

The City of Columbia can utilize many outlets to secure funding and program planning assistance, including the following:

- **Pre-Disaster Mitigation Grant Program (PDM)**  
Authorized by Sec. 203 of the Stafford Act, [this program](#) assists with implementing pre-

## The Columbia "BUZZ"

Keeping in line with FEMA's strategic plan focus, in early 2018, the National Institute of Building Sciences (NBS) released: [Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves: \[2017 Interim Report\]](#). The report was collaboratively funded by FEMA, HUD, the Economic Development Administration (EDA) and the International Code Council (ICC). It is an update to the 2005 study, which showed that \$1 spent on mitigation activities can save an average of \$4 in repair costs for future disasters. The new report shows that now, every dollar spent on Hazard Mitigation efforts can save the nation \$6 in future disaster costs!

The 2017 report also includes two, high-level Benefit Cost Ratios; one analyzing 23 years of federal grant funding data and another analyzing the effects of building new structures beyond base code requirements.

With over \$9M of Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funds awarded to the City of Columbia by FEMA, and numerous programs being implemented, this study confirms the City's mission to promote excellence through quality and continuous improvement.

Rebuilding homes or businesses after a disaster is the right time to incorporate techniques to prevent future disaster damages. These resources provide in-depth in-

The infographic features the text "SMART INVESTING MITIGATION SAVES" at the top. Below this, a circular graphic contains the text "EVERY \$1 SPENT ON MITIGATION, SAVES \$6 ON FUTURE DISASTER LOSSES". To the right of the circle is an illustration of a stack of money with a green plus sign and a dollar sign. At the bottom, there are logos for the National Institute of Building Sciences and FEMA, along with the text "Natural Hazard Mitigation Saves: 2017 Interim Report nibs.org/mitigationsaves".

Benefits of Mitigation (Source: FEMA)

formation on the destructive forces of certain hazards and techniques for building disaster-resistant structures. Additional resources, free publications and design guidance can be found through [FEMA's Building Science Branch](#).

For an update on the City of Columbia's Flood Recovery progress, take a look at the [Flood Recovery Dashboard](#).

disaster, natural hazard mitigation programs. The goal is to reduce the effects of disasters on people and structures, as well as to reduce the reliance on Federal funding.

- **Federal Transportation Association (FTA) Emergency Relief Program**

Established under MAP-21 legislation, [this program](#) helps states and public transportation systems to pay for protecting, repairing and/or replacing equipment and facilities damaged by emergencies including floods, hurricanes and tornadoes. It can also fund capital projects to repair or replace equipment and facilities that are in danger of suffering serious damage from a natural disaster, or emergency event. In fact, on May 31, 2018, [the FTA announced](#) the allocation of \$277.5M in funding for states and territories affected by Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

- **The Emergency Management Performance Grant (EMPG)**

Established by Sec. 662 of the Post Katrina Emergency Management Reform Act, and the Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, this [multi – year, FEMA program,](#)

provides funding for emergency events that require state or local assets, but do not reach the level of a Federal Declaration. EMPG helps states not only achieve target levels of capability in catastrophic planning and emergency management, but also funds training and exercises, public awareness campaigns and communications/warning systems.

### **To Reduce the Complexity of FEMA**

By streamlining and improving how resources are administered, FEMA can reduce the programmatic barriers that can often hinder the timely award of funds to agencies and communities in urgent need. One solution, newly approved in June 2018, is [a revised policy](#) for Sec 428 Public Assistance Alternative Procedures for Direct Administrative Costs (DAC), which provides more clearly defined instructions for proper use. This includes established deadlines and timetables to help grantees to navigate in compliance with policy requirements, which also reduces the grantees risk of incurring non-reimbursable expenses. It also allows for the use of excess DAC funds for cost effective hazard mitigation activities that reduce the risk of damage in future disasters.