

Betterment – A betterment is defined as any additional feature, upgrading, or change in capacity or character of the facility from its predisaster condition. Costs for a betterment are generally not eligible for ER funding unless justified on the basis of economy, suitability, and engineering feasibility and reasonable assurance of preventing future similar damage. A betterment should be obviously and quickly justifiable without extensive public hearing, environmental, historical, right of way, or other encumbrances. The justification must weigh the costs of the betterment against the probability of future recurring eligible damage and repair costs.

Upgrading resulting from construction of replacement facilities to current standards as defined above, is not considered a betterment relative to the need for further justification. However with respect to roadways, increases in capacity or a change in character of the facility would be considered a betterment but are not justified for ER participation.

Catastrophic Failure – The sudden failure of a major element of the highway system due to an external cause. The failure must not be attributable primarily to gradual and progressive deterioration or lack of proper maintenance. Closing a facility because of danger of imminent collapse is not in itself a catastrophic failure.

Emergency Repairs/Emergency Opening – Repairs, including temporary traffic operations, which are undertaken during or immediately following a disaster to: (1) minimize the extent of damage, (2) protect remaining facilities, or (3) restore essential travel.

External Cause – An outside force or phenomenon separate from the damaged element and not primarily the result of an existing condition.

Force Account – The performance of highway construction work by a state transportation agency, a local agency, a railroad, or a public utility company by use of labor, equipment, materials, and supplies furnished by them and used under their direct control.

Functional Classification – Streets and highways are grouped into classes or systems according to the character of service they are intended to provide. This process is called functional classification. Most travel involves movement through a network of roads, so it is necessary to determine how this travel can be channeled within the network in a logical and efficient manner. Functional classification defines the nature of this channeling process by defining the role that any particular road or street should play in serving the flow of trips through a highway network.

Heavy Maintenance – Work usually done by local agencies to repair damage normally expected from seasonal and/or occasionally-unusual natural conditions or events. It includes work at a site required as a direct result of a disaster which reasonably can be accommodated by a local agency’s road maintenance forces. Snow removal is considered heavy maintenance. Heavy maintenance is not eligible for emergency relief assistance.

Natural Disaster – Sudden and unusual natural occurrences which cause serious damage, such as intense rainfall, floods, windstorms, landslides, tidal waves, or earthquakes.

Permanent Restoration – Repair and restoration of highway facilities to predisaster conditions, including restoration in kind or replacement facilities.

Proclamation – A declaration of emergency by the Governor or President.

Serious Damage – Heavy, major, or unusual damage to a highway which severely impairs the safety or usefulness of the highway or results in road closure. Serious damage must be beyond the scope of heavy maintenance.

Disaster Event Date – A specific date which FHWA approves as the event date of the disaster (i.e., earthquake). This date is generally the same as that declared by FEMA.

Disaster Event Period – The time span or duration between the beginning date and ending date approved by FHWA for certain disasters such as storms. These dates are generally the same as those declared by FEMA.