



EARTHQUAKE-SAFE HOMES PROGRAM Design and Construction Bidder Fact Sheet

Property owners that participate in Oakland's Earthquake-Safe Homes Program (ESHP) must follow a specific bidding and permit submission process to guarantee that their retrofit receives a grant upon completion. Engineers and contractors interested in working on ESHP projects should review the details below to effectively navigate this process and ensure success for their clients.

All referenced materials are available at the ESHP website and may be completed digitally and emailed.

<https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/earthquake-safe-homes-programs>

Eligible Retrofit Activities

Retrofits qualifying for a grant from ESHP must conform to CEBC Chapter A3, or be completed using the [FEMA Plan Set](#)¹ (FPS) as modified here, if eligible. *Plan Set A may not be used for ESHP projects.* See Pages 3-4 of the [ESHP Guidelines](#) for more information regarding required and optional measures that are reimbursable by ESHP.

If a building initially appears eligible for the FPS according to the checklist but has a compromised foundation or other features that make those specifications impractical, exceptions can be made. In some cases, minor adjustments to the FPS by a licensed engineer will suffice. In other cases, a full engineered plan set may be the preferred solution. If you suspect this is an issue, please contact the ESHP office to discuss the circumstances.

**** Please Note the following modifications² to the FEMA Plan Set for ESHP projects ****

- 1. Sheet S0:** Instead of the "Eligibility for Use" checklist on Sheet S0, use the "FEMA Plan Set Eligibility" checklist on page 5 of the ESHP Guidelines.
- 2. Sheet D4, detail 1:** Regarding nailing along the top edge of the plywood braced panel, replace the note "may stagger ..." with the following: "Provide all required nailing at upper top plate."
- 3. Sheet D5, details 1 and 2:** Regarding nailing along the top edge of the plywood braced panel, replace the note "may stagger ..." with the following: "Provide all required nailing at upper top plate."

Bidding Process

Once an ESHP participant confirms their intent to proceed, they must solicit bids for their retrofit within 45 days from an engineer (if engineered plans are required), or from a contractor that can adapt the FEMA Plan Set for their building. Construction bidders must complete the [ESHP Construction Bid Form](#) to indicate what measures are included or excluded in their proposal, how soon they can begin the project, and how long it is expected to take. An itemized bid clearly describing the scope of work and the cost for each measure is preferred along with this form. These itemized services and the proposed payment schedule must be included in the final contract if selected to proceed.

Submission Process

The permit process for ESHP retrofits differs from a typical project in two primary ways:

- 1. Permit applications for ESHP projects are submitted directly to the ESHP office** and routed internally to the Permit Center. A digital PDF of the plans and calculations must be submitted once they are complete,

¹ https://www.fema.gov/media-library-data/1573753230448-1ea79fd48f054cf0435098eb7f55f75e/FEMAP-1024_RA2_SecondEdition_2019.pdf

² Modifications 2 and 3 correct errors in the FEMA Plan Set that have not yet been updated in the 2019 version.

along with the completed [Project Description](#) and [Permit Application](#). If plans are to scale larger than 11x17, 2 hard-copy sets must be delivered in person or by mail. Once routed, permit staff will contact the applicant to follow up with payment of fees and other details required for issuance.

- 2. ESHP projects must be approved by FEMA prior to permit issuance.** After the initial intake of the permit application and zoning approval, the project will be submitted to FEMA so that their review can be conducted at the same time as plan-check. This is a critical step and any project issued a permit prior to FEMA approval will no longer be eligible to receive an ESHP grant. See Pages 11-12 of the [ESHP Guidelines](#) for more information

Construction and Change Orders

Once the retrofit permit is issued, normal oversight by the permit center applies and ESHP staff are not involved in that process. However, any changes to the planned scope of work must be submitted to the ESHP office before new/altered activities begin. Deviations from the scope of work as approved by FEMA may result in a project becoming ineligible for reimbursement. Any change orders that increase the cost must be submitted with supporting narrative and photo/plan check comments as need to support the need for alterations.

Billing and Reimbursement

For most projects, owners will pay directly for services according to the schedule agreed upon in the design or construction contract. Once the project is complete, owners are required to submit invoices and proof of payment to request reimbursement. The invoices must itemize charges separately for design, construction, change orders, special inspections, and permit fees, where applicable. Cash payments are not allowed.

Because ESHP grants are provided on a reimbursement basis, in a limited number of cases an owner may receive a loan from the City for up-front costs incurred during construction. When this happens, payment for services is issued from an escrow account established through Residential Lending and Rehabilitation Services in the same manner as other RLS Rehabs programs. This requires the service provider to establish an "iSupplier" account to receive payment. When this is the case, the ESHP participant will inform contractors bidding on the project to ensure that payment terms are understood.

ESHP Referral List

Upon request, ESHP participants are provided with referrals for services from the ESHP referral list. A select number of referrals are provided on a rotating basis. These referrals do not imply endorsement and participants are responsible for checking references and credentials, and negotiating any related contracts.

Engineers and contractors interested in bidding on ESHP projects can be added to the ESHP Referral list in the following ways:

- Successful completion of an ESHP project,
- Existing inclusion in the bidder list for the Residential Lending Services HMIP Program,³ and/or
- Submission of an application to ESHP to be included as an approved bidder.

If you wish to be included in this list, contact ResidentialLending@oaklandca.gov for more information.

Questions?

Please do not hesitate to contact the ESHP office with any questions about the retrofit process or requirements at 510-238-3598 or ResidentialLending@oaklandca.gov. Feedback regarding your experience working on ESHP projects is also encouraged.

³ <https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/home-maintenance-and-improvement-program-hmip-application-and-instructions>