

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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California is one of the most seismically active States in the U.S. Over the coming decades, earthquakes of varying intensity can be expected throughout the State. Yet, the State is replete with buildings, numbering in the thousands, which are not ready to withstand the expected shock. The potential for great loss of life, injury and property damage is immense.

Most local jurisdictions are aware of the need to address this issue. Since the 1986 adoption of the "URM (Unreinforced Masonry Building) Law" in California, municipalities large and small have devoted their limited resources to identifying URM buildings in their jurisdiction that are susceptible to serious damage in the event of a major earthquake, and developing mitigation programs as required by the law. A number of earthquake experts are now recommending, and several jurisdictions have begun, identification and mitigation of other seismically hazardous structures such as concrete frame structures lacking ductile connections, poorly designed tilt-up concrete buildings with inadequate roof-wall connections, and older (pre-1960) homes with inadequate strength in their foundations and cripple walls. However, many of the jurisdictions which are diligently identifying the hazards are at a loss as to how they might encourage owners to undertake needed retrofitting projects.

This *Handbook* is designed to help local jurisdictions develop their own seismic retrofit incentive programs. Using both extensive case studies and abbreviated descriptions, it offers the reader a chance to examine the steps which 17 cities have taken to address these issues. The *Handbook* also provides a comprehensive list of financing options. To give readers a context for their program development, the *Handbook* includes both a discussion of California's legislative activity in this area and an analysis of liability considerations.

The following is a chapter by chapter summary of the contents of the *Handbook*, with conclusions drawn as appropriate.

PERSPECTIVE

The **PERSPECTIVE** section of this Handbook introduces the subject of retrofit incentives with the thoughts of Charles Eadie, currently the City Planner of the City of Watsonville. Prior to joining Watsonville's staff Mr. Eadie served as Project Manager of the City of Santa Cruz Redevelopment Agency Downtown Recovery Plan. Mr. Eadie acknowledges that decisions about retrofit requirements and financing are extraordinarily difficult, both for owners and for public officials. Santa Cruz struggled with the issue in the mid 1980's, in the end leaving the decision to retrofit up to individual owners. Today, after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake, Eadie