A panoramic view of the Seattle skyline under a clear blue sky. The Space Needle is prominent on the left. In the background, Mount Rainier is visible. The foreground shows various city buildings and green trees.

# Unreinforced Masonry (URM) Voluntary Retrofit Resolution

Photo by John Skelton



Seattle Department of  
Construction and Inspections

Public Safety & Human Services Committee  
September 26, 2023

# SDCI Purpose and Values

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## Our Purpose

Helping people build a safe, livable, and inclusive Seattle.

## Our Values

- Equity
- Respect
- Quality
- Integrity
- Service

# Goals of Proposed Resolution 32111

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1. Celebrate the milestone of publishing the updated Draft URM Retrofit Technical Standard.
2. Provide transparency to building owners of SDCI's intent to use this Draft URM Retrofit Technical Standard to inform future legislation.
3. Formally add development of a URM Voluntary Retrofit Ordinance and Retrofit Recognition Process to SDCI's workplan.

# Today's Briefing

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## History

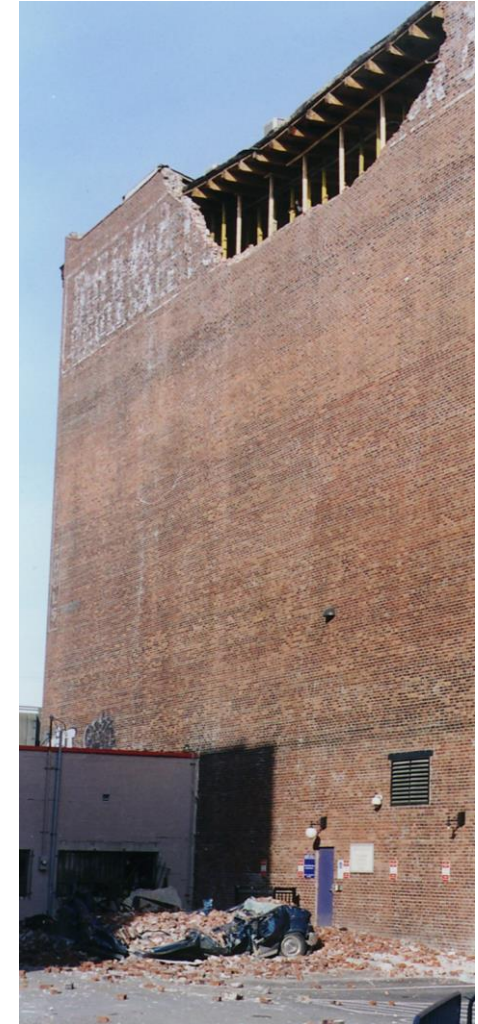
- Resolution 32033 (2021)

## Proposed Legislation

- URM Voluntary Retrofit Resolution 32111

## Next Steps

- Parallel Tracks:
  - Technical Standard Development
  - Policy Development



# Existing Legislation (2021)

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## Resolution 32033 requests:

- Definition of URM
- **Identification of the type of seismic retrofit standard required to bring URM into compliance, depending on type of building**
- Categorization system for building types and/or uses that prioritize key buildings and services
- Timeline for compliance
- Enforcement strategy
- Variety of potential funding opportunities and financial incentives for building owners to alleviate the financial burden of required seismic retrofits for URM



# Implementing Resolution 32033

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## Parallel Tracks

### 1. Technical Development

- Updated Draft URM Retrofit Technical Standard
  - Director's Rule 6-2023
  - **Proposed Resolution 32111**

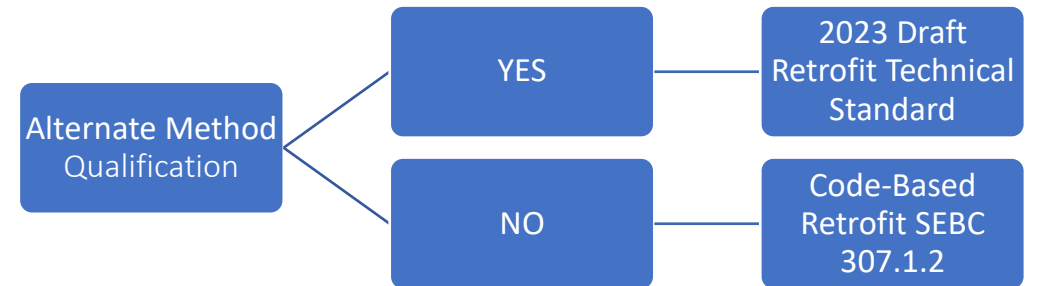
### 2. Policy Development (Ordinance & Program)

- Policy Development Working Groups
- Congresswoman Jayapal Support



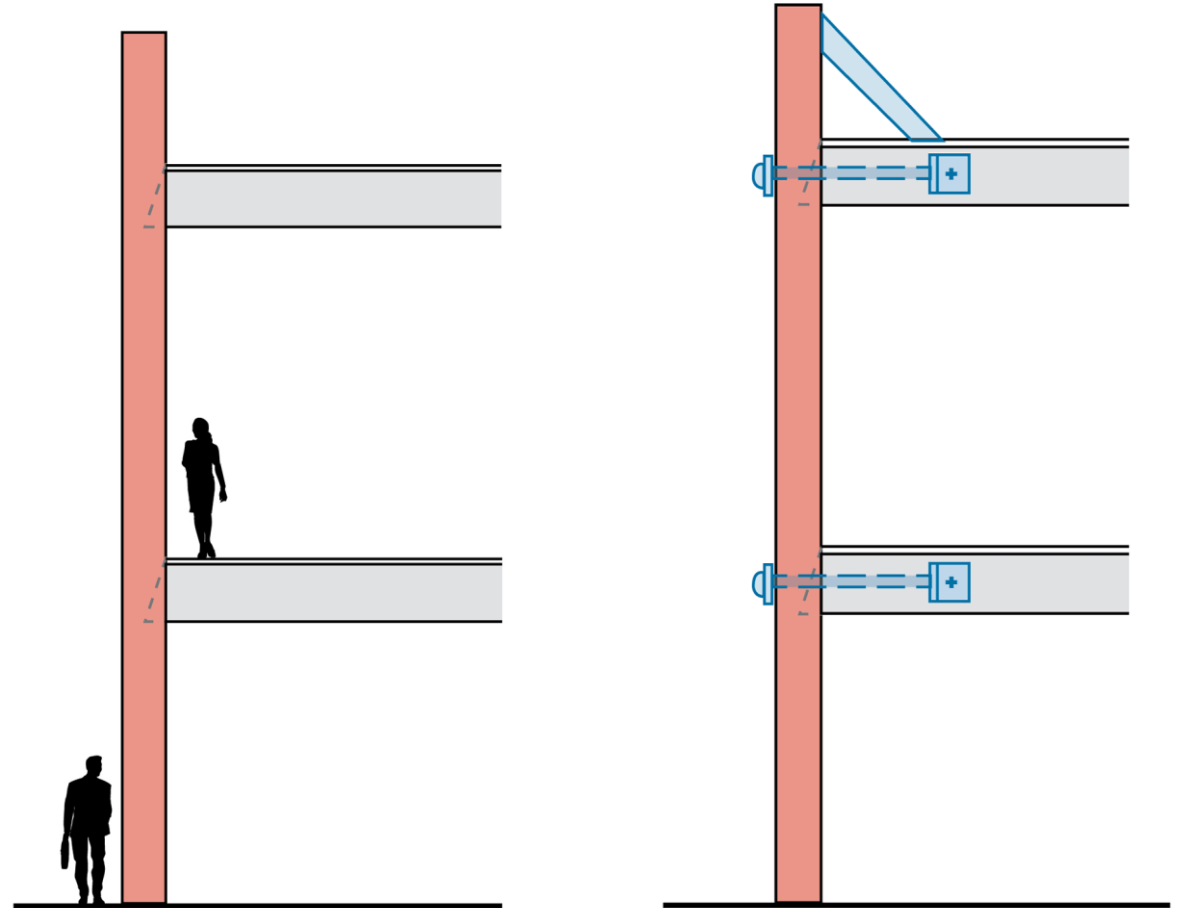
# Technical Development

- Establishing a Minimum Seismic Standard for URM Retrofits
  - 2012 Draft URM Retrofit Standard
  - 2023 Draft URM Retrofit Technical Standard
    - Updated to current understanding of regional seismic hazard and building codes.
    - Developed clearer scope of retrofit and testing vs. referencing general code section.
    - Established criteria for recognizing previous seismic retrofits.
    - Re-established “Alternate Method” for eligible URMs.
      - Sept 19: Adopted via Director’s Rule 6-2023



# The Alternate Method:

- Consists of :
  - Bracing the parapets.
  - Strengthening connections between walls and floors.
  - Preventing the walls from falling outwards.
- Is designed to:
  - Prevent collapse and loss of life while minimizing design and construction costs.

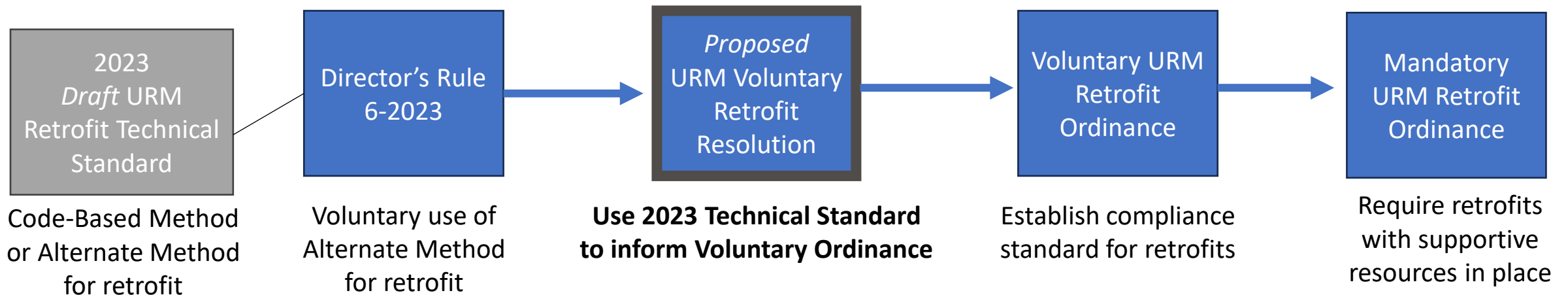




# Proposed URM Voluntary Retrofit Resolution

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- Long-term goal remains establishing a Mandatory URM Retrofit Ordinance
- Introduces a short-term goal: Voluntary URM Retrofit Ordinance (*Spring/Summer 2024*)
  - Establishes a retrofit compliance standard.
  - Provides building owners assurance their retrofit will be compliant with future legislation.



# Continuing Implementation of Resolution 32033

URM Policy Development Working Groups				
Group	Technical Standard Briefing Working Group	Communications Working Group	Funding Working Group	Owners' & Tenants' Needs Working Group
<i>Intent</i>	<i>Provide forum for Q&amp;A on technical standard</i>	<i>Community engagement and acceptance</i>	<i>Explore ways to mitigate cost of retrofits</i>	<i>Address physical and economic displacement</i>
<i>Sub-Group</i>		<i>Case-studies sub-group</i>	<i>Retrofit Credit/TDR sub-group</i>	
<i>Sub-Group</i>			<i>Grant &amp; Finance sub-group</i>	

# Policy Development- Funding Working Group

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- Transfer of Development Rights/Retrofit Credits
  - 9/20 Working Group Meeting
  - Fall 2023 Public Workshop
- FEMA Grant Application
  - \$500,000 to develop “Benefit Cost Analyses” for 3-4 representative URM buildings
  - Congresswoman Jayapal support for improving access to FEMA funding for earthquake retrofits.



# Next Steps

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- Hire new structural plans engineer and intern for URM retrofits
- Establish process to recognize retrofitted structures
- Continue Policy Development Working Groups and IDT meetings
- Work with Mayor's Office, other City departments, City Council, and external stakeholders to implement Resolution 32033 and Resolution 32111 for a Voluntary URM Retrofit Ordinance.
- Coordinate with Council on legislative actions once work is completed
- Support Earthquake Engineering Research Institute (EERI) Annual Meeting to be held in Seattle April 9-12, 2024 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel
- Deliver next progress update memo to Council December 2023

# Questions?

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