

SUMMARY and FISCAL NOTE*

Department:	Dept. Contact/Phone:	CBO Contact/Phone:
LEG	Yolanda Ho / x6-5989	N/A

** Note that the Summary and Fiscal Note describes the version of the bill or resolution as introduced; final legislation including amendments may not be fully described.*

1. BILL SUMMARY

Legislation Title: A RESOLUTION declaring the City Council’s and the Mayor’s intent to consider strategies to ensure that all unreinforced masonry buildings in Seattle are seismically retrofitted.

Summary and background of the Legislation: Unreinforced masonry buildings (URMs) are buildings constructed between 1886 and 1957 with brick or clay tile bearing walls where the parapets and walls are not secured to the floors and roofs. These buildings are particularly vulnerable to damage or collapse during earthquakes, potentially endangering people within the buildings if walls fully or partially collapse and pedestrians if parapets break away and fall onto the sidewalk or street. Seattle has over 1,100 URMs in more than 50 neighborhoods, with the highest concentrations in Capitol Hill, Pioneer Square, and the Chinatown/International District.

While the City has taken various steps over the years to create a mandatory URM retrofit program, it has thus far not required that all URMs in Seattle be retrofitted. This resolution represents the joint commitment by the Mayor and City Council to work on establishing a URM retrofit program, with a work plan that will be led by the Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections and the Office of Emergency Management.

2. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Does this legislation create, fund, or amend a CIP Project? Yes No

3. SUMMARY OF FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Does this legislation amend the Adopted Budget? Yes No

Does the legislation have other financial impacts to The City of Seattle that are not reflected in the above, including direct or indirect, short-term or long-term costs?

This resolution identifies that both City resources and external funding sources will be necessary to successfully implement a mandatory URM retrofit program. Given that costs associated with seismic upgrades for privately owned URMs are estimated to total around \$1.3 billion, the City alone will not be able to offer the financial resources required, and will instead need to assist building owners with accessing affordable funding options and creating other strategies to incentivize retrofits.

Is there financial cost or other impacts of *not* implementing the legislation?

Not moving forward with the development of the mandatory URM retrofit program would result in these buildings continuing to be vulnerable to damage in the event of an earthquake, which poses a potential danger to tenants, workers, property owners, and the community at large.

4. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

a. Does this legislation affect any departments besides the originating department?

The Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections and Office of Emergency Management would lead City efforts to develop the mandatory URM retrofit program based on recommendations from the URM Technical and Policy Committees. The Department of Neighborhoods (DON) would continue to support community outreach and engagement efforts; additionally, DON would assist with development of a process for URM retrofits and permitting in historic districts and for landmark buildings. The Office of Housing and Human Services Department would need to determine a timeline for upgrading URMs with affordable housing and emergency shelter.

b. Is a public hearing required for this legislation?

No.

c. Is publication of notice with *The Daily Journal of Commerce* and/or *The Seattle Times* required for this legislation?

No.

d. Does this legislation affect a piece of property?

No.

e. Please describe any perceived implication for the principles of the Race and Social Justice Initiative. Does this legislation impact vulnerable or historically disadvantaged communities? What is the Language Access plan for any communications to the public?

While URMs are located throughout Seattle, they are concentrated in Capitol Hill, Pioneer Square, and the Chinatown/International District, neighborhoods that feature higher than citywide average proportions of people of color and low-income residents. Implementation of a program requiring seismic upgrades for URMs would protect the lives of people in and around these buildings, and allow neighborhoods to recover more quickly following an earthquake. However, the costs associated with the URM retrofits are substantial and will likely to be a financial burden to property owners. These property owners may choose to pass on the additional costs to tenants through higher rents, which could result in displacement of these residents and/or businesses if the City does not implement measures to mitigate the financial impacts on vulnerable populations.

f. Climate Change Implications

1. Emissions: Is this legislation likely to increase or decrease carbon emissions in a material way?

A mandatory URM retrofit program could potentially decrease building emissions as property owners may be required to also install energy efficiency measures along with the seismic retrofit, depending on the extent of the building renovation.

2. Resiliency: Will the action(s) proposed by this legislation increase or decrease Seattle's resiliency (or ability to adapt) to climate change in a material way? If so, explain. If it is likely to decrease resiliency in a material way, describe what will or could be done to mitigate the effects.

No.

g. If this legislation includes a new initiative or a major programmatic expansion: What are the specific long-term and measurable goal(s) of the program? How will this legislation help achieve the program's desired goal(s)?

The long-term goal of a mandatory URM retrofit program would be to ensure that all URM's are eventually upgraded to current seismic standards to protect life safety and support Seattle's economic resilience in the event of an earthquake.

List attachments/exhibits below:

None.