

JAN 19 2007

PUBLIC SAFETY

PLANNING and LAND USE MGT.
MOTION

The 1994 Northridge Earthquake was the most devastating natural disaster in the history of the City of Los Angeles. In the years since the earthquake, the City has taken many steps aimed at mitigating the effect of future earthquakes and other natural disasters.

As part of its earthquake preparedness plan, the City has enforced the most stringent building codes in the country. As a result, new buildings are safer for residents. Additionally, older brick and masonry buildings have been upgraded through retrofitting or reinforcement.

However, there are two categories of building that still carry significant risk in the event of an earthquake. The first is known as concrete non-ductile. Built largely between 1933 and 1977, they are constructed of materials that are vulnerable to a seismic disturbance. Primarily high-occupancy office buildings, these structures unimproved pose a grave risk in the event of another earthquake.

The second category of at-risk building is the non-shear-wall parking structure. Lacking the support of enclosed walls, these structures are highly susceptible to earthquakes involving horizontal motion. During the Northridge Earthquake, several of these structures collapsed or sustained considerable damage. It was only the early morning incidence that prevented loss of life.

Additionally, because disaster preparedness is a huge responsibility it requires the contribution of both the public and the private sector. Mandatory building retrofit standards can be at times insufficient and impractical. As such, there is a need for regulation that encourages private sector participation in disaster prevention and response.

It has been suggested that a law requiring the public disclosure of the seismic standard of every building (similar to the health grading system used to rate restaurants) would provide an incentive for building owners to strengthen their buildings, because informed tenants could choose safer buildings.

07-0144

I THEREFORE MOVE that the Office of the Chief Legislative Analyst, in consultation with the Emergency Preparedness Department, Department of Building and Safety, the U.S. Geological Survey, and the Southern California Earthquake Center, and Building Owners and Managers Association report back to the City Council on concrete, non-ductile construction and non-sheer-wall parking structures; including:

- How best to identify and inventory these structures
- How to determine the risk level and categorize these structures
- What funding might be available to address this risk

I FURTHER MOVE that the above taskforce be requested to report on the feasibility of an ordinance that would require the public disclosure of the seismic standard of every building.

PRESENTED BY: _____


GREIG SMITH
Councilmember, 12th District

SECONDED BY: _____



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