

Unreinforced Masonry Policy Committee

Strategic Work Plan

March 2012

Unreinforced Masonry (URM) Policy Committee

The URM Policy Committee is a monthly forum for committee members and interested stakeholders to provide feedback to City Staff, the Mayor and City Council on policy options available for development of a URM retrofit program. The group is a collection of business owners, property owners, residents, and interested individuals who were identified and invited by the City to participate in this process. The Committee will discuss a variety of topics and provide recommendations and advice to the City for inclusion in the URM policy. The development of the final program elements is the responsibility of City of Seattle staff.

Policy Committee Process

The URM Policy Committee will meet monthly from March through August, and will provide input to be captured in a report to be written in fall 2012. Legislation implementing a URM retrofit program is anticipated to be submitted to the City Council in early 2013.

URM Policy Committee members will:

- Act as a sounding board for City staff on issues important to the URM retrofit program
- Confirm initial policy issues and suggest appropriate additional topics
- Review existing reports and provide feedback on URM programs from other jurisdictions
- Develop recommendations for a City of Seattle URM retrofit program

City Staff will:

- Provide background information as appropriate to frame discussions
- Provide materials for committee review prior to meetings
- Identify key questions for the committee to discuss
- Provide feedback on committee progress and assist in identifying areas for further discussion or clarification
- Consider committee recommendations during development of the URM policy

Most meetings will begin with a brief overview of relevant background information presented by City staff to ensure committee members have a similar baseline understanding of the discussion topic. In general, background presentations will last 20 minutes and help set the stage for the ensuing conversation. The facilitated discussion that follows will be focused on several key questions, and ultimately will lead to a series of recommendations for the URM retrofit policy. Each meeting will address a separate topic, with the exception of the financing discussion which may span two meetings and may be supported by the work of a subcommittee.

Following each meeting, a summary will be prepared that provides an overview of the discussion and identifies areas of agreement, areas for future discussion, and any action items. Summaries will be distributed to committee members, interested parties, and posted on the City of Seattle URM website.

Prior to the final meeting, committee recommendations and advice will be summarized in a report that will be submitted to the City. The Policy Committee will review and provide input on the report.

City staff will submit legislation implementing a URM retrofit program to the City Council in late 2012. Members of the committee may decide to provide comments on the draft policy to the City Council during the legislative process, and their participation in the URM Policy Committee does not preclude them from doing so.

Committee operating guidelines

Individual behavior:

- We will respect each other's opinions and will work together constructively.
- We will make every effort to attend meetings and arrive on time.
- We will come to meetings prepared to contribute constructively to the discussion.
- We will listen carefully to others' views, will avoid interruptions, and will work to reconcile others' views with our own.
- When speaking, we will consider the time needed for others to share their perspectives.

Process:

- The Policy Committee will strive to provide informed recommendations during policy development, recognizing that the City of Seattle staff and City Council will ultimately make decisions balancing many factors, including Policy Committee input
- We give the facilitator permission to keep the group on track

Ground Rules:

- Be prepared for all meetings
- Listen and speak respectfully
- Avoid side conversations
- Be willing to participate in the process
- Start and end on time

Getting to consensus:

Whenever possible, recommendations will be based on an overall consensus of the Policy Committee. As discussion is underway, committee members will periodically be asked to indicate their support or lack of support for specific topics with an informal poll. This technique will be used to identify areas of disagreement to focus further discussions and work toward consensus. Areas of agreement will be highlighted in the recommendations report.

For some topics, consensus recommendations may not be possible. In that event, a range of opinions or recommendations will be presented in the recommendations report.

Meeting schedule and topics

Date	Overall topic	Discussion	Materials	Staff
8 Mar	Kickoff	<p>Introductions Work plan URM background</p>	<p>Work plan background materials</p>	<p>Angie Sandy</p>
22 Mar	Thresholds for retrofit	<p>What types of buildings should be required to be retrofitted?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should the use of the building be considered? • Should location be considered? • What other factors should be considered? 		
26 Apr	Financing options	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification of financing issues: list incentives/barriers • What financing options should be explored? • How best to approach? Subcommittee or whole committee? 		
24 May	Timeline for compliance	<p>What should be the key elements in the compliance program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the trigger for a retrofit? Tenant improvements? Building sale? Others? • How long should building owners have to complete the retrofits? • What are appropriate milestones? • Should the compliance program be phased? 		
28 Jun	Financing options	<p>What financing options are available? How will financing affect enforcement? How will financing affect compliance? What financial incentive could be developed?</p>		
26 Jul	Incentives	<p>What incentives would be appropriate and effective?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there variations based on building use/type? • Are there opportunities to use TDRs? 		
23 Aug	Enforcement	<p>What should be the elements of the enforcement program?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What penalties would be appropriate and effective? • Are there variations based on building use/type? 		
27 Sep	Recommendations report	<p>Report outline</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comments/questions • Next steps 	<p>Report outline</p>	<p>Angie</p>

