



URM TDR/Retrofit Credit Sub-Group

Photo by John Skelton



Seattle Department of
Construction and Inspections

Seattle Office of
Emergency Management

May 02, 2023

Today's Meeting

- Goal:
 - Establish working group deliverable
- Meeting Agenda:
 - Introductions
 - SDCI URM Program Update
 - Retrofit Credit Proposal Timeline & Deliverable Discussion
 - Review Principles for URM TDR Discussion
 - Next Steps





Introductions

URM Technical Standard Update

Parallel Tracks

1. Technical Development

- Update of Draft Technical Standards

2. Policy Development (Ordinance & Program)

- Policy Development Working Groups
- Interdepartmental Team



Ongoing Work: Technical Development

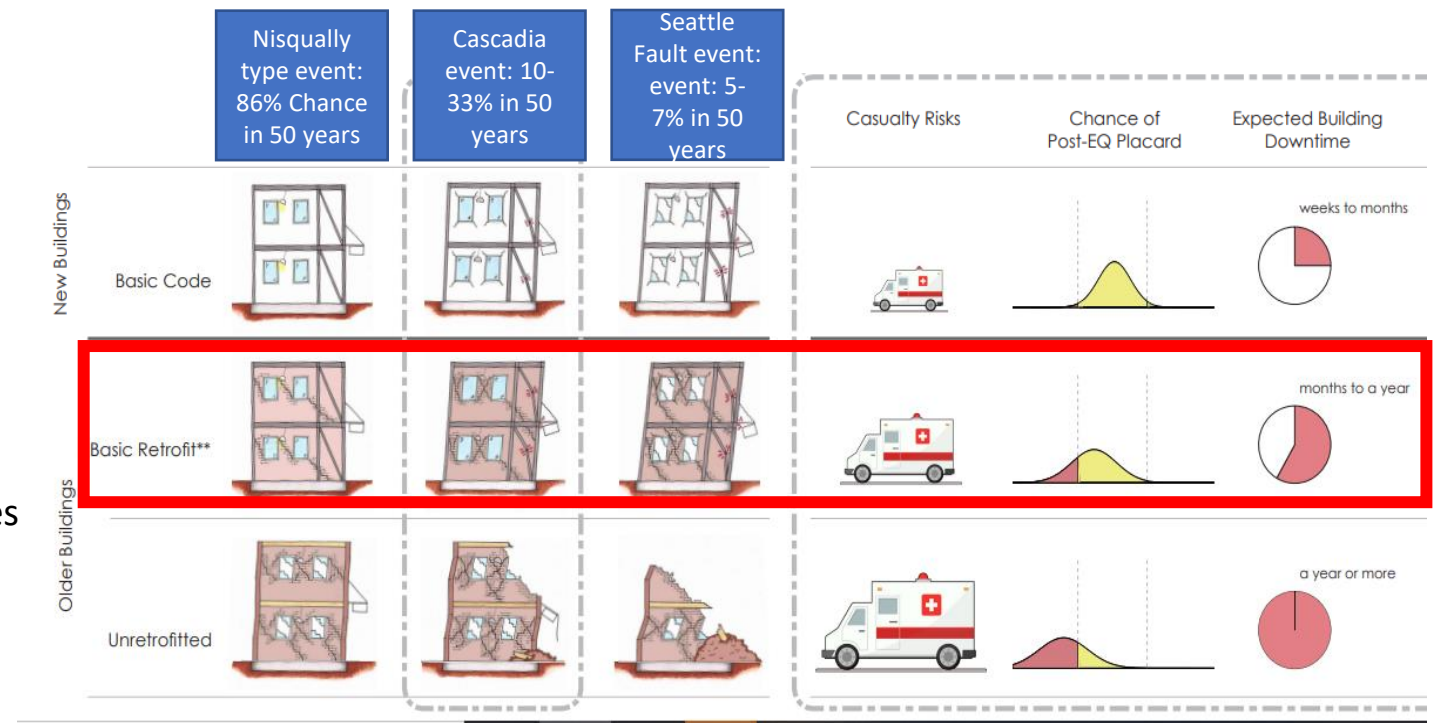
1. Comprehensive Method

- Seattle Existing Building Code (SEBC) Substantial Alteration
 - Reduced Seismic Forces

2. Alternate Method

- Requires:
 - Anchoring of walls to floors and roof
 - Tall URM walls are strong-backed to prevent out-of-plane bending failure
 - Parapets and other dangerous appendages to be braced

Neither method will be a contributing factor for other Substantial Alteration triggers.



Ongoing Work: Technical Development

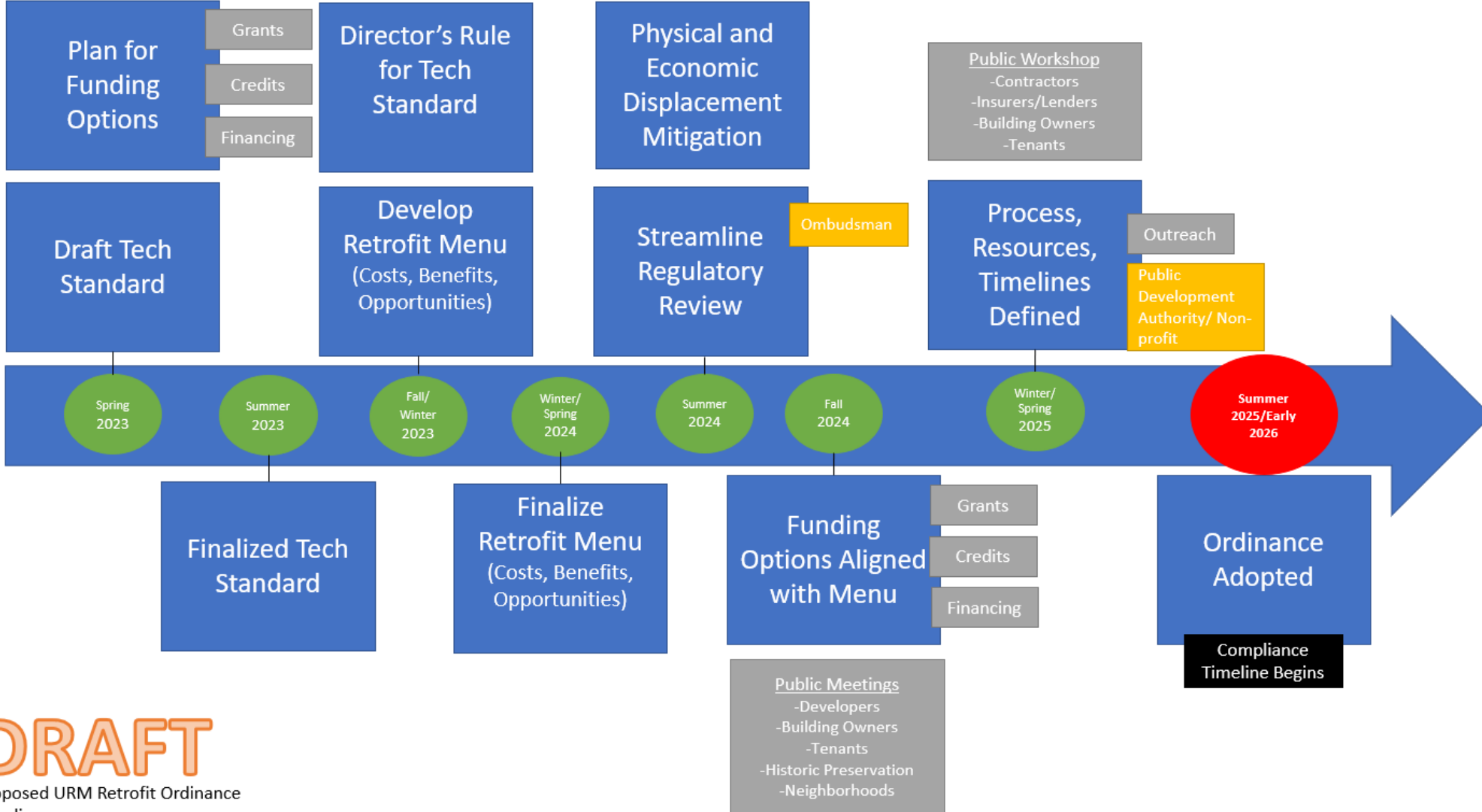
Director's Rule

- Establish standard for compliance prior to URM ordinance adoption
 - Support voluntary retrofits
 - Structures retrofitted to this Technical Standard will be deemed to comply with any future URM ordinance.
- Timeframe
 - Goal: Complete technical standard by summer 2023
 - Complete Director's Rule by end of 2023

Ongoing Work: Policy Development

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&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 & Finance sub-group</i>	

Proposed Ordinance Timeline



DRAFT

Proposed URM Retrofit Ordinance
Timeline
04/20/2023

Generalized Retrofit Credit TDR Timeline



DRAFT
05/01/2023

Review URM TDR Program Brainstorm Notes

Draft for discussion purposes only – May 2023

Unreinforced Masonry Structure (URM) Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Program Exploration

Principals For URM TDR Geography

- A. Create a program that is functional and useful - ultimately leading to retrofits of URM structures to increase safety.
 - A healthy number of URM owners would be interested in selling their development rights and upgrading their structure.
 - A healthy number of developers would be interested in buying development rights from URM owners.
 - There is a rough balance/equalization between the volume of credits to send, and sites to receive, within the program geographic area.
 - There is no acute shortage of either eligible sending sites or receiving sites within the program geography.
 - The program is mostly market-driven, but the public sector will play a role to guide or incentivize.
- B. Create a program that has a rationale connection and relationship between sending and receiving areas.
 - Stive for added development capacity to be a shift, rather than an overall net increase. (Zoning capacity increases are in progress for other policy purposes).
 - Community members experience a balance between the added density and preservation or forgone development.
 - Sending and receiving sites have similar real estate values so there is no heavy inflow or outflow from an area.
- C. Consider principles of racial equity when setting geographic areas to ensure no disproportionate impacts on BIPOC communities and consider potential for repair of past harms.

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OPTION: INDIVIDUAL URBAN VILLAGE / URBAN CENTER SCALE GEOGRAPHIES

Description: The geographic scale of the TDR areas would be at the scale of individual Urban Centers, or urban villages - generally considered a "neighborhood scale". Eligible sending sites and eligible receiving sites would have to be within the same Urban Center or Urban Village. This is consistent with how the City structures existing TDR programs for Landmarks and open space and vulnerable masonry structure TDR.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively low quantity of sending and receiving sites within each area could allow manageable balancing of sending and receiving sites. • Increased development capacity could be achieved and tailored on a neighborhood scale. • Similar real estate values with the area • Consistent with existing regulatory framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Too limited in terms of both sending and receiving sites creating shortages. • Some neighborhoods may have little or no demand for development for long periods of time. • Complexity and administrative burden of calibrating standards in each village. • Complexity and administrative burden of monitoring and tracking credits in individual villages.

General Conclusion: The cons substantially outweigh the pros. A program at the individual urban center / urban village scale would be likely to be too cumbersome to establish, and it could lead to stagnant markets in many areas.

OPTION: CITYWIDE GEOGRAPHY

Description: The geographic scale of the TDR areas would be the City of Seattle as a whole. Transfer of credits from any eligible structure could be used in new development anywhere the zoning contains a capacity bonus for URM TDR.

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single program provides for potential simplicity in the tracking and oversight of credits. • All URM structures would be covered by the program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Big imbalances in real estate values could lead to heavy inflows or outflows – potential equity impacts. • Community members would not experience rational balancing. • It would be difficult to identify and calibrate appropriate capacity increases across the city as a whole. • Strong potential for a flooded market with many eligible sites could deflate value of credits making the program unused.

General Conclusion: The cons outweigh the pros. A program at the citywide scale would be unwieldy and have potential shortcomings.

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OPTION: A HYBRID GEOGRAPHY

Description: The geographic scale of the TDR areas would be in several broad sub-geographies. A.) The contiguous center city Urban Centers (Downtown, First Hill/Cap Hill, Uptown, South Lake Union); B.) The Manufacturing / Industrial Centers; and C.) A set of about 4-5 non-Center district areas, loosely based on Council districts or 'sectors' of the city (i.e. NW, NE, Central, SW, SE or similar).

Pros	Cons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relatively balanced real estate values within geographies. • Relatively manageable quantities of sending and receiving sites • Similar zone designations and land use regulatory tools within geographies • Achieves 'shifting' principal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Somewhat difficult to set up and administer credits in sub-geographies • Potential for differential in how robust the markets would be in different areas.

General Conclusion: Approach may be achievable. Pros outweigh the cons more than in the other options.

Other Notes on Possibilities for Hybrid Approach

General

- Consider a stand-alone program section of the Land Use code to the greatest possible extent. Structure it similarly to the religious properties bonus subsections within each major zone chapter.

Non Urban-Center Development Capacity Increases

- Increases that add a 1-2 story increase in wood construction in zones that already allow multi-story development convey strong value. (Site work, infrastructure etc. is already in)
- These types of capacity increases are strong candidates, and could be attainable and reasonable, in a zone-based approach:
 - i.e. NC40 → NC65 (FAR 3.0 → 4.5, increment of 1.5; +50%, +25' height)
 - i.e. NC55 → NC75 (FAR 3.75 → 5.5, increment of 1.75; +50% +20' height)
 - i.e. LR3 → MR (FAR 2.3 → 4.5; +96% +30' height)
 - i.e. LR2 → LR3 (FAR 1.4 → 2.3; +65% +10' height)
- In general, Urban Village areas are not currently contemplated for upzone for other purposes through the Comprehensive Plan major update.

Urban Center Geography Capacity Increases

- Minor modifications to the existing incentive zoning bonus structure sections of the code could be made.
- Position a new URM bonus relative to other bonus features.

Manufacturing / Industrial Centers

- Focus on the new Industrial and Innovation zone near light rail. This is the best eligible receiving area within MICs.

Next Steps

- Meeting Frequency & Scheduling

QUESTIONS?

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