

What's Shakin'

MARCH 22, 2005

If you have been on the look out for seismic retrofitting activity around the City, you are in luck. The City is anticipating a number of retrofit projects coming along this spring. An exciting new look awaits the buildings at 705 Higuera and 760 Higuera. Also, strengthening will soon be underway along Higuera at 385, 715, and 719. It seems as though the City planned to have work start at the bottom of Higuera and proceed up, but all the credit goes to the outstanding building owners who have chosen to jump into the strengthening process!

HERE'S WHERE THINGS STAND TODAY.

☞ The City requires Architectural Review of exterior changes to buildings. The **Cultural Heritage Committee** (CHC) reviews all exterior changes to historically designated buildings. At their March 14th meeting, the CHC delegated review of certain seismic strengthening details to staff recognizing the need to balance the City's interest in Historic Preservation with the time constraints faced by owners and the City. On the back of this newsletter you can find the particulars of the action taken by the CHC.

☞ Most businesses have installed the permanent "**Earthquake Warning Sign**" as required by local law. These signs are part of the City's requirements and should now be visible on all URM buildings in the City.

☞ Internally, the City has a new Seismic Update Committee consisting of those employees responsible for addressing the concerns of owners who are actively involved in retrofitting as well as parties affected by the on-going work. These employees include parking enforcement, public works, engineering, community development, and administration personnel. We all hope to be able to work ahead of the curve to help avoid issues caused by retrofitting in the City. If you know how we can help, please call the Seismic Coordinator.

OWNERS: WHERE SHOULD YOU BE IN THE PROCESS?

At this point in time, all owners should have already contacted an engineer for construction plan preparation. If you haven't already done this, it is important that you do it NOW. Call Claire Clark for advice on how to proceed, a list of engineers or architects, and advice.

781-7164 or cclark@slocity.org.

If your project includes major changes to your property, please keep in mind that City processes take time and an early start is advised.

All owners of URM buildings in San Luis Obispo must submit a permit request by July 1, 2005.

COMMUNITY CONCERNS:

We are beginning to hear the gentle trickle of rumors that are inevitable when a long awaited process begins to take shape. Here is my response to two rumors we have heard:

1) The City is not requiring people to do retrofits according to planned retrofitting zones. Sometimes we wish we had the power and will to make things so nice and neat! However, the City has chosen, instead, to allow building owners to use their good judgment in determining how to meet the retrofitting deadlines. It does happen that we have a few naturally-occurring areas of retrofitting. The south side of the 700 block of Higuera is seeing activity start. Also, some owners on Garden St. are looking to start.

2) The City does not have specific prohibitions against work proceeding on both sides of a street. There are some reasonable restrictions placed on individual business owners in this regard but work is allowed on both sides of a street and we will see work on-going to retrofit buildings directly across from one another. Our goal is to manage this process so that people can still circulate around the City and feel that they can get to the businesses they prefer.

NEED HELP? HAVE A SUGGESTION?

Call or Write: Claire Clark, Seismic Coordinator
781-7164 or cclark@slocity.org