

Procedure to Apply for Retrofitted URM Status in the URM Database

The following document outlines the requirements for demonstrating that a building included in the City of Seattle *URM Database* has been seismically retrofitted in compliance with the Seattle Existing Building Code section 304.5.1 Item 3. To demonstrate compliance, fill out the [Application Form for Retrofitted Status in the URM Database](#) and provide additional evidence or a report as noted in the following sections. The sections below describe the requirements based on the original permit date and building code version used for the structural retrofit work.

Item 3a: Permitted between September 16, 1996 and April 24, 2009

URM Buildings that have undergone a seismic retrofit due to a substantial alteration determination, permitted between September 16, 1996 and April 24, 2009 using the 1994 or later edition of the Seattle Building Code. A report confirming that the retrofit work was completed shall be prepared by a licensed Structural Engineer and submitted to SDCI. The report shall include the following:

1. Building address and SDCI Permit Number
2. A written summary of the force levels, evaluation procedure, structural retrofit design and scope of work performed. Review of the record drawings of the structure shall be performed to confirm that the primary elements of the seismic-force-resisting system and their detailing were designed in accordance with the applicable code in effect at the time. Specifically indicate that the following elements were addressed: wall anchorage; diaphragm shear transfer; out-of-plane wall bracing; parapets and appendage bracing. Approved references may include, but are not limited to, one of the following:
 - a. Seattle Building Code
 - b. NEHRP Handbook for the Seismic Evaluation of Existing Buildings (FEMA 178)
 - c. The 1991 Uniform Code for Building Conservation (for unreinforced masonry buildings only)
 - d. Methods for Evaluating the Seismic Strength of Existing Buildings (ATC -14)
 - e. Department of Defense Tri-services manual
 - f. Handbook for the Seismic Evaluation of Buildings (FEMA 310)
 - g. Prestandard and Commentary for the Seismic Rehabilitation of Buildings (FEMA 356)
 - h. ASCE 31-03 Seismic Evaluation of Existing Buildings
 - i. ASCE 41-06 Seismic Rehabilitation of Existing Buildings
 - j. DPD Director's Rule 32-96
 - k. Other alternate methodologies approved by the building official.
3. Attestation by the structural engineer that the work appears to be completed per the original construction documents.
 - a. Field verification shall be performed to confirm that the building was constructed in general conformance with record drawings and that no modifications have been made that significantly affect the expected performance of the lateral-force-resisting system.
 - b. Field verification confirms that significant deterioration of structural materials has not occurred.
 - c. The permit status shall be recorded with SDCI as Building Final Inspection – Passed.
4. Report shall bear the seal and signature of a licensed Structural Engineer.

Item 3b: Permitted after April 24, 2009

URM Buildings that have undergone a seismic retrofit due to a substantial alteration determination, permitted between April 24, 2009 and November 15, 2024 using the 2006 or later edition of the Seattle Building Code. The form may be completed by the building owner or their authorized agent and shall include the building address and SDCI permit number associated with the seismic retrofit work. Photographic evidence must be submitted along with the completed form.

SDCI will use this information to confirm a permit was issued, appropriate design criteria was used, and construction was completed in general conformance with the building code at the time. Additional information may be requested by SDCI during the review process.

Item 3c: Other

For other seismic retrofits, a licensed Structural Engineer shall submit satisfactory evidence demonstrating the building and any applicable seismic retrofits meet the structural performance intent of SEBC 304.5, subject to approval by the Code Official. Email SCI_URM@Seattle.gov prior to submitting a report for a building covered by Section 3 to discuss reporting requirements. Other seismic retrofits may include, but are not limited to, voluntary seismic retrofits in compliance with:

1. 2021 SEBC Section 304.4.2 using reduced IBC seismic forces
2. Draft versions of the URM Retrofit Technical Standard
3. Director's Rule 6-2023

Submit Report to SDCI

1. Recognized URM retrofits are documented through a Land Use Analysis Request record that will remain associated with the property. This record will contain uploaded relevant documents, SDCI review comments (if any), and it will serve as the record of SDCI's final decision.
2. You can apply for this Land Use Analysis Request via the [Seattle Services Portal](#), with this [Help Article](#) to assist. Choose "URM Retrofit Verification" as the letter type.
3. Upload the application, seismic evaluation report (if required) and supporting documentation to the Portal using the following document types:
 1. Request for Land Use Analysis Letter (URM recognition application form)
 2. Seismic evaluation report
 3. Other supporting documents (photographs, additional information, etc...)

Upon submission of the report or letter to SDCI, the code official will review the provided documentation and determine if the retrofit meets the requirements of SEBC 304.5.1 Item 3. If found compliant, the building's status in the "*List of URM's Identified by SDCI*" will be changed to "Retrofitted". URM buildings that have been retrofitted will not be removed from the URM database. If a retrofitted building no longer fits the definition of a URM building per the 2021 SEBC, then the building may be removed from the database by submitting an [appeal](#). The owner will be notified of the final decision in writing and the decision will be recorded in the permit record.

If a building retrofit is reviewed and found non-compliant its status in the database will remain unchanged. The retrofit status appeal can be re-filed if new supporting information is provided. Additional review will be charged at the SDCI hourly base rate per the [SDCI Fee Subtitle](#).