



PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
BUILDING & SAFETY DIVISION

September 17, 2018

Dear Property Owner:

**RE: NOTIFICATION OF POTENTIALLY VULNERABLE BUILDING**

With an aging building stock in a seismically active region, Pasadena has recently begun to explore the need for a local ordinance requiring seismic retrofits to certain categories of potentially vulnerable buildings. Previously, the State of California mandated unreinforced masonry buildings (URMs) to be seismically retrofitted, or vacated and boarded up, or demolished, and Pasadena was successful in attaining full compliance prior to the 2007 deadline. Despite this great effort, there are several other categories of vulnerable buildings that remain within city limits. From our experience with URM's, the most effective tool available to reduce the risks associated with structural vulnerabilities is to adopt a local ordinance which mandates retrofits. One such category of vulnerable buildings are wood soft-story buildings. Wood soft-story buildings are wood-framed buildings with more than one story that typically have extensive ground story windows, garage doors, or open-air spaces (such as parking) with little or no solid walls. In the 1989 Loma Prieta and 1994 Northridge earthquakes, wood soft-story buildings accounted for significant human loss and property damage. As such, the City is currently in the process of adopting a Wood Soft-Story Retrofit Ordinance which is anticipated to go into effect by Spring 2019.

**This letter serves to inform you that, based on a preliminary citywide study and review of departmental records, your property may be identified as being a potentially vulnerable building and, if a Wood Soft-Story Retrofit Ordinance is adopted, your building may be subject to retrofitting to meet minimum seismic standards.**

This letter also serves to advise you that any call, correspondence or other contact with an offer for services related to a seismic retrofit of your property should be considered as marketing or telemarketing only. The City of Pasadena has not endorsed or solicited any contractor, architect, engineer or any other professional in any way in relation to this potential ordinance.

At this time, additional information regarding the specific structural retrofit requirements and timelines for compliance are not available. You will receive future correspondence with this information once the ordinance is adopted.

For the most current information regarding the status of the Wood Soft-Story Retrofit Ordinance and to join the email notification list, please visit [www.cityofpasadena.net/softstoryretrofit](http://www.cityofpasadena.net/softstoryretrofit). For questions, please contact [softstoryretrofit@cityofpasadena.net](mailto:softstoryretrofit@cityofpasadena.net).