



Emergency Management & Homeland Security

Unreinforced Masonry Code Program



Unreinforced Masonry Code Program - Overview

What is unreinforced masonry (URM)?

It is a term for structures that do not have steel reinforcing the masonry walls. These walls are the bearing walls.

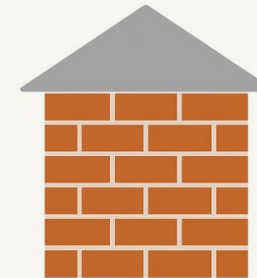
Why are URM structures of concern?

Earthquake damage to URM structures can be severe and hazardous due to a lack of reinforcement, poor mortar and inadequate roof-to-wall ties.

What is the purpose of this program?

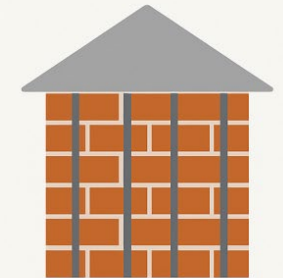
To inform and educate Washoe County property owners about URM and advanced mitigation efforts county-wide.

UNREINFORCED MASONRY



No internal support.
Walls prone to collapse
in an earthquake.

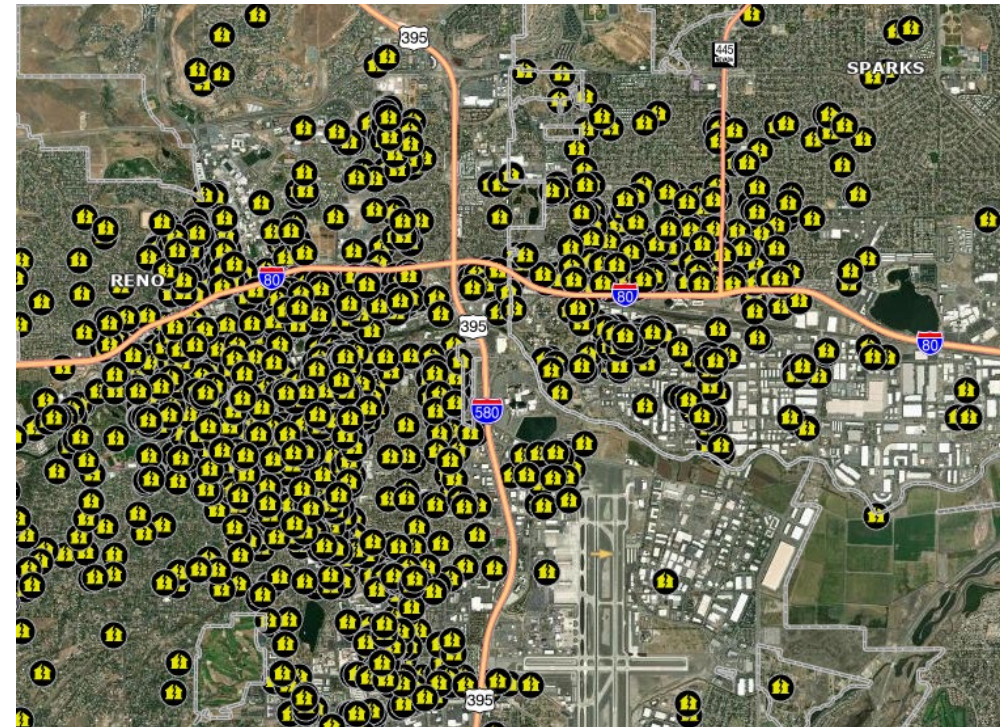
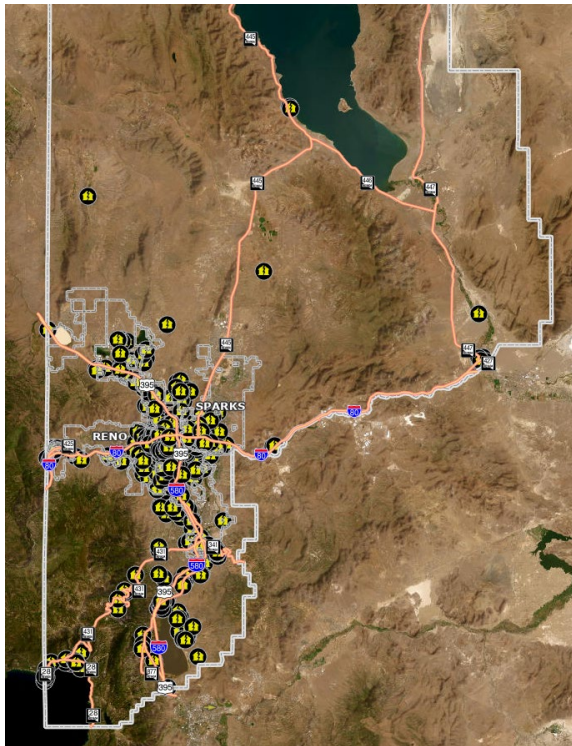
REINFORCED MASONRY



Steel bars (rebar) add
strength and flexibility

Problem, Need and Scope

- 3,500 known URM buildings are highly vulnerable to earthquakes and life-safety hazards
- Mapped concentrations in Reno/Sparks/Washoe include impoverished neighborhoods



Hazard and Lifelines Impact



Project Scope and Deliverables

1. Notify property owners of unreinforced masonry status and seismic risks
2. Develop education materials: storyboard, mailers, doorhangers, PSAs, and billboards
3. Host community workshops for awareness and voluntary safety improvements
4. Comprehensive public outreach campaign over 6 months

Timeline, Cost and Match

- Timeline: 7 months
- Estimated Cost: \$15,000
- **Match:** Employee Salary Time



BRIC Alignment and Community Benefits

- Strengthens building code enforcement capacity
- Supports seismic risk reduction for vulnerable structures
- Improves community safety and resilience in at-risk neighborhoods
- Enhances public awareness and education
- Supports mitigation decision-making



Thank You!