



Northridge 20 Symposium: Update and next steps

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On the 20th anniversary of the Northridge earthquake, more than 600 people gathered in Los Angeles to share the impacts of the 1994 earthquake, highlight accomplishments of the past two decades, and identify necessary steps forward to make our communities more resilient to future earthquakes. Participating organizations and attendees including earth scientists, structural engineers, risk modelers, emergency managers and public officials also signed a Statement of Support committing to make California communities more earthquake resilient.

While the lessons learned from Northridge led to two decades of dedicated research, seismic public policy development, building code development, seismic rehabilitation, insurance reform, mitigation and education, more work is needed. A summary report is underway by plenary speakers and session chairs in eleven key areas who pledged to develop a list of recommended next steps to achieve regional (LA) and California state-wide earthquake resilience. The topic areas include earth science and seismology, ground motions and ground failure, lifelines and utilities, transportation, building types (residential, concrete, steel), risk communication, and business and insurance. These recommendations are being summarized into a Northridge 20 Summary report to be released in spring 2014.

While this report will outline many actions that need to be taken, it will not prioritize these recommendations or identify any interdependencies between disciplines. Without a prioritized integrated list, these recommendations will be difficult for government and community leaders, and key stakeholders to implement. PEER is interested in getting feedback and support from the Seismic Safety Commission to move forward a series of invitational and public workshops to transform the current “wish list” of recommendations into a useful white paper with clear, succinct recommendations and action plan for the State of California. This plan could then become a framework that could be used and modified by regional and local governments.

