

## INTRODUCTION

Preparation for a large earthquake in Berkeley is highly complex. Politicians, homeowners, renters, industrial workers, administrators, educators, merchants, and police officers have diverse responsibilities and face different types of decisions when evaluating potential seismic hazards. These decisions are complicated by the unpredictability of earthquakes. Pre-planned responses to earthquakes must take into account the time of day or night the earthquake occurs, the intensity of the shaking, and the varying consequences of the shaking due to the unique physical and structural characteristics of individual neighborhoods.

Despite the complexity and difficulties earthquake preparation presents, many preventative measures that will save lives and property have been developed. Information gathered by geologists, engineers, psychologists, safety experts, and emergency planners from previous earthquakes in Long Beach (1933), Alaska (1964), San Fernando Valley (1971), and other places around the world is now available for Berkeley's use. This information includes evaluations of emergency services such as police, fire, and hospitals, as well as engineering data on the structural stability of highways, utilities, commercial structures, and residences. In addition, information outlining the basic rules all people should observe before, during, and after an earthquake are ready for distribution.

Preparation for Berkeley's next great earthquake thus becomes an issue of fitting existing seismic safety information into a Berkeley context, and distributing this information to the community. Fortunately, much of the expected death and damage in the next great earthquake can be averted by allocating modest resources to preparation. Regardless of the amount of resources allocated, effective preparation is dependent on communication of relevant information to the people in Berkeley who can use it. The coming earthquake will affect everyone in the community, and people should be prepared to react in a responsible life-preserving manner.