



**City of  
Portland, Oregon**  
**Bureau of Development Services**  
FROM CONCEPT TO CONSTRUCTION

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**EQUIP – Emergency Quick Inspection Program**  
*“Getting Portland Back to Business”*

Buildings and structures in seismically active regions vary in their levels of damage after an event and require a safety assessment before they can be reoccupied, repaired, or demolished. Depending on the size of the event or aftershock, businesses can be disrupted, and people displaced from work and homes. If businesses can't function, the economic losses impact the entire city. If the city is also without housing, that often leads to displacement and a loss of productivity. If the functionality of facilities is not resumed quickly, both businesses and residents may leave the area which results in a delayed and less complete recovery.

Local building departments are responsible for ensuring the safety of the facilities within their jurisdiction. A safety assessment needs to be completed after a seismic event and any subsequent major aftershocks to determine if a structure can be safely re-occupied or if access should be restricted until it is repaired.

There will be a huge demand for damage assessments and assessors after a major earthquake and the process of coordinating assessments for an entire jurisdiction's facilities will be challenging and a significant departure from daily business functions. To manage this challenge, some communities (i.e., San Francisco, Salt Lake City, Seattle) have implemented a quick inspection program that works with large institutional facility owners prior to an event to organize, qualify, and deputize a private team of qualified inspectors. EQUIP program participants assemble a qualified team who knows the building, creates a written inspection plan, and submits it to the City for approval.

EQUIP allows building owners and the City to work collaboratively and creates an emergency plan that benefits all parties. The Bureau of Development Services is preparing to launch EQUIP in the City of Portland; it would allow qualified and approved private inspection teams to respond quickly after a seismic event. City resources could then be applied to other structures and tasks to speed recovery in the region.

Prepared by D. Tarries and A. Castleton 08-12-19