

# Foreword

The volume you are now holding in your hands, the *NEHRP Guidelines for the Seismic Rehabilitation of Buildings*, and its companion *Commentary* volume, are the culminating manifestation of over 13 years of effort. They contain systematic guidance enabling design professionals to formulate effective and reliable rehabilitation approaches that will limit the expected earthquake damage to a specified range for a specified level of ground shaking. This kind of guidance applicable to all types of existing buildings and in all parts of the country has never existed before.

Since 1984, when the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) first began a program to address the risk posed by seismically unsafe existing buildings, the creation of these *Guidelines* has been the principal target of FEMA's efforts. Prior preparatory steps, however, were much needed, as was noted in the 1985 *Action Plan* developed at FEMA's request by the ABE Joint Venture. These included the development of a standard methodology for identifying at-risk buildings quickly or in depth, a compendium of effective rehabilitation techniques, and an identification of societal implications of rehabilitation.

By 1990, this technical platform had been essentially completed, and work could begin on these *Guidelines*. The \$8 million, seven-year project required the varied talents of over 100 engineers, researchers and writers, smoothly orchestrated by the Building Seismic Safety

Council (BSSC), overall manager of the project; the Applied Technology Council (ATC); and the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). Hundreds more donated their knowledge and time to the project by reviewing draft documents at various stages of development and providing comments, criticisms, and suggestions for improvements. Additional refinements and improvements resulted from the consensus review of the *Guidelines* document and its companion *Commentary* through the balloting process of the BSSC during the last year of the effort.

No one who worked on this project in any capacity, whether volunteer, paid consultant or staff, received monetary compensation commensurate with his or her efforts. The dedication of all was truly outstanding. It seemed that everyone involved recognized the magnitude of the step forward that was being taken in the progress toward greater seismic safety of our communities, and gave his or her utmost. FEMA and the FEMA Project Officer personally warmly and sincerely thank everyone who participated in this endeavor. Simple thanks from FEMA in a Foreword, however, can never reward these individuals adequately. The fervent hope is that, perhaps, having the *Guidelines* used extensively now and improved by future generations will be the reward that they so justly and richly deserve.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency

