



1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Across the United States, natural and human-caused disasters have led to increasing levels of death, injury, property damage, and interruption of business and government services. The toll on families and individuals can be immense after a disaster and damaged businesses may not be able to contribute to the economy afterward. The time, money and emotional effort to respond to and recover from these disasters divert public resources and attention from other important programs and problems. The City of Paso Robles recognizes the consequences of disasters and the need to reduce the impacts of natural and human-caused hazards. In addition, the recent San Simeon earthquake that shook the City of Paso Robles in December, 2003, caused damage and loss of life that has focused the City's attention on the necessity of a Hazard Mitigation Plan.

The elected and appointed officials of the City of Paso Robles know that with careful selection, mitigation actions in the form of projects and programs can become long-term, cost effective means for reducing the impact of natural and human-caused hazards. Applying this knowledge, the City of Paso Robles Hazard Mitigation Planning Team has collaborated to prepare this *City of Paso Robles Hazard Mitigation Plan* (Plan) with the support of various city officials, URS Corporation consultants, the County of San Luis Obispo Department of Emergency Services, California Office of Emergency Services, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). This Plan is the result of approximately one year of work to develop a Hazard Mitigation Plan that will guide the City toward greater disaster resistance in full accord with the character and needs of the community and the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. A complete description of how this Plan is organized is given in Section 3.3 (Plan Description).

People and property in the City of Paso Robles are at risk from a variety of hazards that have the potential for causing loss of life and damage to property, infrastructure, and the environment. These potential hazards are identified and assessed in Section 6 (Risk Assessment) of this Plan and include the following: drought, earthquake, expansive soils, extreme heat, flood, hazardous materials, landslides, subsidence, and wildland fires. Historical experience and the risk assessment results confirm that earthquakes pose the greatest risk to the community.

The purpose of hazard mitigation is to implement actions that eliminate the risk from hazards, or reduce the severity of the effects of hazards on people and property. Mitigation actions are both short-term and long-term activities that reduce the cause or occurrence of hazards; reduce exposure to hazards; or reduce effects of hazards through various means to include preparedness, response, and recovery measures. The City's proposed mitigation actions are defined in Section 7 (Mitigation Strategy) of this Plan.

Following each major disaster declaration, the City is required to review and update the Plan's mitigation strategy. Additionally, in compliance with FEMA regulations, the Plan must be reviewed, revised if appropriate, and resubmitted for approval within the next five years in order to continue to be eligible for various hazard mitigation grant-funding sources, including FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP). It is however, recommended that the Plan be reviewed annually to ensure it remains current.