

Ocean Beach Pier Renewal Project

Background

The Ocean Beach (OB) Pier was built in 1966 and has experienced ongoing degradation requiring increasingly frequent repair due to its exposure to the harsh marine environment, where it is subjected to wind, waves and the salt-laden marine atmosphere. Based on the findings of a 2018 study of the OB Pier, the City has determined that pursuing a potential replacement of the pier is the best option considering the ongoing costs of repairs, the need to modernize the existing facility and the anticipation of future sea level rise.

In recent years, the pier faced almost annual storm-related closures for repairs. It has been closed since October of 2023 following damage to the pier's perimeter railing. Subsequently, a pile failed in December of that year, and the City determined that it would not be reopened. The pier continues to suffer damage during the high surf season and lost another pile in December of 2024.

Given the overall cost, timeline, and environmental permitting required to structurally rehabilitate the existing pier, in addition to the likelihood of additional damage occurring during future winter storms and projected sea level rise, City engineers have determined that any significant structural rehabilitation is not feasible. At this time, the City has decided to leave the pier as is and move forward with plans for a long-term replacement of the pier.

The Project

This project aims to provide a long-term solution for the nearly 60-year-old pier through a potential replacement. More than just rebuilding, the vision is to reimagine the pier as a modern, dynamic space that aligns with current City and industry standards—evolving into a vibrant, multi-use destination that serves a broader range of community needs.

Public Outreach

The City, in partnership with marine structural consultant Moffatt & Nichol, has developed the preferred alternative for the potential replacement of the pier based on input from San Diegans, community impacts, environmental permitting, sustainability, operational usage, cost, historical significance and other factors.

A task force was initiated to represent the local community's interest in the project. The Ocean Beach Pier Task Force included volunteer community members who were nominated by local advisory groups and included representatives from Mayor Gloria's office, Council District 2, Ocean Beach Planning Board, Ocean Beach Town Council, Ocean Beach Main Street Association, Ocean Beach Community Development Corporation, and the City's Engineering and Capital Projects Department. The task force was active throughout the development of the preferred alternative.

The City of San Diego undertook a comprehensive and inclusive community engagement process to guide the redesign of the Ocean Beach Pier, recognizing its regional significance and the need for a design that reflects community values. A diverse project team, including City staff, designers, public relations experts, and the volunteer task force, led outreach efforts that extended beyond Ocean Beach to the greater San Diego region. Through 5 workshops, multiple pop-up events, online surveys, and targeted outreach to underserved communities, the team gathered input from over 5,000 participants. These efforts prioritized transparency and inclusivity, ensuring feedback from a wide range of stakeholders, including anglers, surfers,



environmentalists, business owners, and educators. The City presented the proposed concept (preferred alternative) to the public at the final community event on October 26th, 2024.

After completing extensive public outreach and finalizing the proposed pier concept, the project has transitioned into the discretionary permitting phase.

Project Status

The Ocean Beach Pier Renewal Project is actively progressing. After completing extensive public outreach and finalizing the proposed pier concept, the project team has transitioned into the permitting and environmental review phase. Given the scale of the project, a comprehensive Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is required under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), which can typically take anywhere from two to five years, depending upon the findings and potential impacts. In addition, the project must secure Site and Coastal Development Permits and coordinate with multiple regulatory agencies, including but not limited to the California Coastal Commission, Department of Fish and Wildlife, Regional Water Quality Control Board and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers—each of which involves its own comprehensive review.

Anticipated Budget

The current cost estimate for the Ocean Beach Pier Renewal project is \$170 million to \$190 million. This cost includes all community engagement completed to date, acquiring all necessary permitting, demolishing the existing pier and constructing a new pier. Currently, \$8.4 million in state funding has been designated for the project.

Future Funding

The City is actively pursuing all available funding sources for this Capital Improvement Program project as well as the long-term maintenance of the facility. Options for potential funding include State and Federal grants and the possibility for a public-private partnership, which can be structured in various ways, including as a private loan.

The Ocean Pier Revitalization Act of 2024 has been renamed the American Pier Revitalization Act. Mayor Gloria is actively working with Congressman Levin to secure a Republican co-sponsor for this bill.

Anticipated Timeline*

Public Review of Draft EIR – Spring 2026

Development of Bridging documents – Early 2028

EIR/Permitting Complete – Early 2028

Construction Start Date – Early 2029

*Timeline of these elements is subject to change based on the procurement of funding and permitting approval.

Reference

To learn more about this project—including the project schedule, the 2018 study of the OB Pier, and video recordings from past community events—please visit the project’s website at

<https://www.sandiego.gov/cip/project-info/project-profiles/ocean-beach-pier-renewal>.



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