



THE CITY OF SAN DIEGO

M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: April 16, 2024

TO: Rania Amen, Director and City Engineer, Engineering and Capital Projects Department

FROM: Andy Field, Director, Parks and Recreation Department

SUBJECT: Request for Emergency Declaration for Crystal Pier

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This memorandum requests expedited review by Public Works Contracting to evaluate and repair damage to Crystal Pier, which include but are not limited to, the broken piles located at Bent 29 - Pile 29G and Bent 38 - Pile 38G both of which are found on the south side of the pier and located in the surf zone.

**Crystal Pier**

Crystal Pier is one of the City's most visited and popular public destinations, attracting visitors regionally and from around the world. Crystal Pier, located at the foot of Garnet Avenue, projects almost 900 feet into the Pacific Ocean from the Pacific Beach boardwalk. The easterly 400 feet of the pier deck supports visitor cottages of the Crystal Pier Hotel. The pier provides sweeping vistas of the Pacific Ocean and the north San Diego coastline. Additionally, access to the pier allows viewing of spectacular breaking surf and up-close views of sea life ranging from seals and sea lions to sea birds and marine mammals.

**Damage**

The broken pile at Bent 29 (Pile 29G) was first discovered on March 21, 2024. Upon discovery, immediate action was taken to safeguard the pier by Engineering and Capital Projects, San Diego Fire-Rescue, as well as the Parks and Recreation Department. Lifeguards began to monitor the pile to protect the public from approaching Bent 29 due to potential falling debris. Shortly after, another broken pile was found at Bent 38 (Pile 38G). The Parks and Recreation Department has closed off public access to the pier deck at the gate located at Bent 28. This closure is in effect until further notice.

The broken piles are likely due to the cumulative tidal forces that made this storm season so unusual. The loss of these two piles has caused sections of the pier to lose structural strength and integrity which may lead to additional portions to fail, as well as cascading destruction of the pier if subjected to further tidal forces.

Field inspection visits by Engineering and Capital Projects and the City's marine structural engineering consultant have resulted in a recommendation to immediately install new piles and connecting braces to replace the broken components of the pier.

**Request**

Based on the preliminary observations noted above, it appears that the pier structure requires replacement of the broken piles and braces that have been identified, as well as those that may be discovered during further inspection. This work is beyond the capabilities of the Parks and Recreation Department. We therefore request that an emergency project be initiated to repair the broken piles so that the public part of the pier can be reopened. This would likely include an investigation and full report by licensed engineers to assess the full nature of the damage, provide recommendations for repair, and obtain a contractor to provide the necessary repairs.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Karen Dennison at [KDennison@sandiego.gov](mailto:KDennison@sandiego.gov) or me at [AField@sandiego.gov](mailto:AField@sandiego.gov).



Andy Field  
Parks and Recreation Director

AF/kd

cc: Alia Khouri, Deputy Chief Operating Officer  
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