



Santa Monica Pier Assessment

Recommendations Report for Urban Design Elements



This document is a part of the Santa Monica Pier Infrastructure Assessment Study to assist in the development of the City of Santa Monica's multi-year Capital Improvement and Maintenance Program, led by Moffat & Nichol.

Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC
Planning and Design
1133 Columbia St., #205
San Diego, CA 92101

November 17, 2008



contents

- 1** Introduction
- 2** Methodology
- 3** Reccomendations
- 4** Site Furnishings
- 21** Carousel Building Roof



Elizabeth R. Sedat Collection

The Santa Monica Pier has been an iconic element of the City and region since the early 1900's. Unique among California piers, the Santa Monica Pier, its history and activities, are a classic yet – whimsical stage welcoming tourists and locals alike. However, over many years of harsh coastal weather, active urban use and the addition of an eclectic mix of site furnishings (benches, lighting, trash receptacles, etc) the Pier no longer presents a cohesive atmosphere worthy of Santa Monica. This set of recommendations, based on an assessment of current conditions, is intended to guide the choices for the selection of new and replacement furnishings.

Introduction

methodology

The first step in the process was to review the Santa Monica Pier Design Guidelines (Guidelines), adopted in 1987. The Guidelines provide a general vision for the character of the buildings and furnishings and allow flexibility in accomplishing its goals.



WRT then interviewed City staff from maintenance, public safety and operations. The Assessment of Existing Conditions was conducted in late 2007 and presented to the Santa Monica Pier Restoration Corporation (SMPRC) March 5, 2008, and is included as Attachment No. 1. WRT was then directed to prepare recommendations for improving the character and function of the public spaces of the Pier.

Design alternatives were presented to the SMPRC Operations Committee on May 28, 2008. The alternatives included three 'families' of site furnishings representing a range from those of Palisades Park and South Beach to contemporary styles and materials. Based on this input, WRT is making the following recommendations.

recommendations

The Santa Monica Pier was built for the pleasure of the public in 1909. Ever since, citizens and visitors have enjoyed the amusements and relaxation of the Pier. The very nature of a pier – apart from the land, above the sea and into the sky – is a place for enjoying a remarkable set of experiences. Santa Monica’s traditions of spinning around the carousel, soaring in the Ferris wheel, gathering for picnics, entertainment, fishing, strolling, and enjoying the view remain strongly held. The nationally recognized historic structure of the Hippodrome Building and contributing elements on the Pier, combined with the purpose – for fun, sets the foundational character and style of the public realm of the Pier deck. This character has been best described as ‘whimsical.’

Two fundamental opportunities were identified in the Assessment of Existing Conditions:

1. Visual clarity, user comfort and maintenance could be improved with the selection of a complementary ‘family’ of site furnishings.
2. The placement of site furnishings could assist in directing circulation and defining spaces for specific use, i.e. performance.

The following recommendations are organized to guide the selection of specific items, i.e. benches, lights, etc., – Site Furnishings; and how to arrange them on the Pier.



site furnishings

The historic Byzantine-Moorish styled Hippodrome at the base of the bridge graciously marks the entrance to the Pier. More recently constructed buildings line the eastern portion of Pier and are characterized by the bold signage for the dining and amusement attractions within. The architecture of the distant west end might be characterized as an eclectic craftsman style. The site furnishings are a mix of styles and materials and the wood decking is compromised by numerous anomalies of asphalt and metal plates.

The style and character of the Pier's site furnishings need to be simplified to become an integrated family of elements that is complementary of the architecture styles and contributes to a sophisticated sense of whimsy. This will reduce the visual clutter that distracts from the quality of the Pier experience and reduce efforts in maintenance and operation.

Each of the items meets basic criteria for high quality materials that will reasonably withstand the corrosive coastal environment and require minimal maintenance which contribute to a level of 'sustainability.' The manufacturers and model information illustrate the design intent. Equivalent elements may be identified through the City's public bid process. Quantities are approximate, provided for planning purposes. Figure 1 diagrammatically locates each of the site furnishing elements.

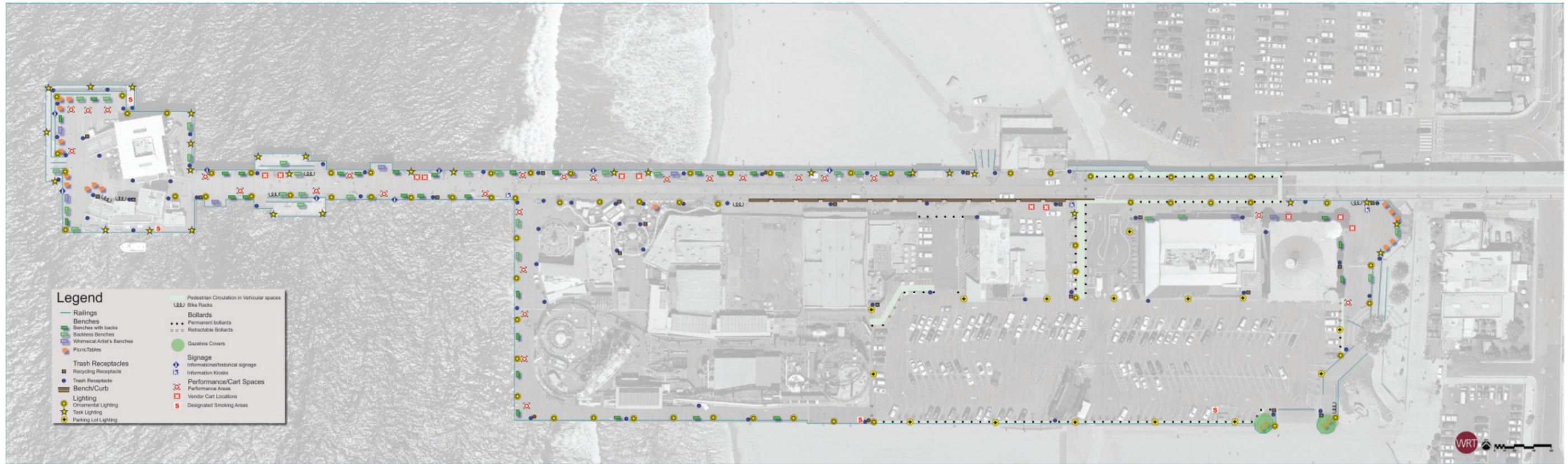


Figure 1, Location Diagram for Site Furnishings

railings

The 6,100 linear feet of rail on the Pier is constructed of three to four horizontal two inch steel pipe rails, with two inch diameter steel tube posts and fittings, figure 2. Some sections have a wood top rail. Stainless steel cables have been added in the horizontal direction, centered between metal rails to create a four inch minimum clearance. However, current code requires vertical barriers at minimum four inches on center. In addition, joints vary in different sections of the railing.

There are various materials that could replace the railing that would require less maintenance and present a different aesthetic image. However, the cost to replace the railings is estimated at \$2.75 million. A more economical alternative is to retrofit the railing to meet current code for opening size. To achieve the requirement, stainless steel cable at four inch on-center spacing should be added in a vertical pattern.

The color of the railing should be painted Mediterranean Blue, RAL color system 5002 to match new benches, tables and lighting.



Figure 2 Railing





Figure 3 Bench



Figure 4 Benches by artists



benches

The Assessment of Existing Conditions concluded that there were not enough seating and resting opportunities on the Pier. In addition, there are three types of benches on the Pier, some of which are more comfortable than others. The Condition Assessment Report noted that the benches on the Pier have backs and are in a fixed position, most facing the ocean. These types of benches limit the visitors view. A backless bench provides more flexibility for the visitor.

WRT recommends a new bench standard to replace variety of existing benches. The new benches should be of a style that provides options for backless benches and benches with backs, inviting the visitor to look out to the ocean or onto the spectacle of performances and people on the Pier. This report recommends the removal of all thirty two existing benches and the addition of forty one new backed benches and twenty seven backless. They should be surface mounted to the deck and carefully located in the locations shown in figure 1 to provide a range of seating opportunities.

The recommended style of bench, figure 3, is 48” Scarborough – horizontal metal strap as manufactured by Landscapeforms, figure 3. These benches should all be powdercoated by the manufacturer in ‘Ocean Blue’ to match the railing, tables and lights. The estimated cost for each bench is \$990 for backless and \$1,080 for backed.

The bench is also an opportunity to engage public art on the Pier. Introducing public art into the seating is encouraged to build on the legacy of ‘whimsy’ of the Pier. Santa Monica, renowned for its programs for public art, may consider numerous options, such as:

- a. replace all existing benches with a ‘off-the-shelf’ benches and add a few artist-designed/custom made benches each year, figure 4;
- b. locate artist-designed/custom made benches in specific locations, such as on the deck east of the Hippodrome; or
- c. engage an artist to enhance a new set of ‘off-the-shelf’ benches.

WRT recommends establishing a public art program to invite qualified artists to create one-of-a-kind seating for specific sites along the pier.

Figure 1 illustrates the eight locations where the off-the-shelf bench might be replaced, over time, with an artist bench. The estimated budget for the artist benches is \$12,000 each, including artist fee, materials and fabrication, installation, one year’s maintenance.

picnic tables



Figure 5 Picnic table

The Assessment of Existing Conditions found that all the nineteen tables are owned and maintained by merchants and shop owners. Their locations serve the tenant's use. However, there is a need for public picnic tables.

Ten of the nineteen existing tables are the square, as shown in figure 5, with red seating and table surface. The other ten are small round tables. The style and character of the square metal tables, now used by tenants, with attached bench seating is recommended above other options considered, figure 5.

The existing nineteen should be replaced by merchants to match the recommended blue color and nineteen new tables should be added (to be owned and maintained by the City) in the locations, figure 1.

Six to ten of the new tables should have two or three benches to invite wheel chair users to the table.

The color of the perforated metal table tops should be powder coated 'Slate Blue', as manufactured by Wabash Valley, for movable tables: Models SG140P - 46" Sq. Table - Perforated and SG155P - 46" 3 - Seat ADA Accessible Table; and for surface mounted tables: SG229P - 46" Sq. Table - 4 Seats - Surf. Mt - Basic Frame - Perforated, and SG234P - 46" Sq. Table - 3 Seats - Surf. Mt - Basic Frame - Perforated.

trash receptacles

Five types of trash receptacles were identified by the Assessment of Existing Conditions. Of the seventy four existing receptacles forty five are the recommended concrete unit, figure 6. They were found to require minimal maintenance and most durable of the options available. Approximately thirty new trash receptacles and twenty new receptacles for recycled materials should be placed as shown, figure 1, for ease of use and collection. The trash receptacle model QR-CAL2832W, anodized aluminum lid A-24 as manufactured by Quickcrete or approved equal, with the city name embossed and bronze logo inset to match the existing units. Material to be Ecocast, made from 70% post consumer and industrial waste, color – Erosion. The top eight inches, including the rim, should be sealed to minimize staining.



Figure 6 Receptacle

Receptacles for recyclable materials need to be added to the Pier (twenty total). They should be set next to the trash receptacles. It is recommended that the twenty new receptacles for recyclable materials match the trash receptacles with the addition of signage. Signage or other designations on the trash receptacle, is recommended to designate the specific use of the receptacle and educate the public on the importance of recycling. The signage program is to be coordinated with other City agencies.

The City of Santa Monica uses the following receptacle for recyclable materials: Recycled Recycler Excel Series Model 900-X50-F 50 gal. front access 25”x 22”x 49” 115 lbs., ‘Designer’ series, as manufactured by Midpoint International. For the Pier, brown recycled plastic lumber, is recommended.

It includes a rubber baffle to discourage inappropriate removal of materials.



Figure 7
Recyclable Materials Receptacle

decking

The tradition of the wood deck is important to the distinct character of the Pier. The top decking is primarily two inch by twelve inch by twenty foot long lumber. Portions of the pier are covered with asphalt and metal plates. The Design Guidelines require wood decking for the whole pier. The ongoing program for repairing the wood deck is encouraged to continue so that all the metal plates and asphalted areas will be removed and replaced with wood decking.



curbs

The Assessment of Existing Conditions noted the use of heavy timbers bolted to the pier deck to guide traffic, define the fire lane and cover the transition between the different elevations between the Municipal Pier from the pedestrian walkway. While the curbs could be a tripping hazard for pedestrians and visually unappealing they also are used for seating. The fire lane and pedestrian areas should be defined by other means, i.e. bollards – see section B. Spatial Composition and Circulation. A wooden ramp should replace the asphalt infill along the seam between the two piers at the amusement facility entrances.

Seat walls should be introduced along the curb line, at the change in surface elevation between the two decks. The seat wall should be sixteen inches tall by sixteen inches wide in various lengths with two foot wide gaps at approximately twenty foot intervals to allow pedestrians to walk between, see figure 1. The curb seating should be constructed in recycled plastic lumber/wood composite, in a medium dark brown color, figure 8.



Figure 8, Seat wall

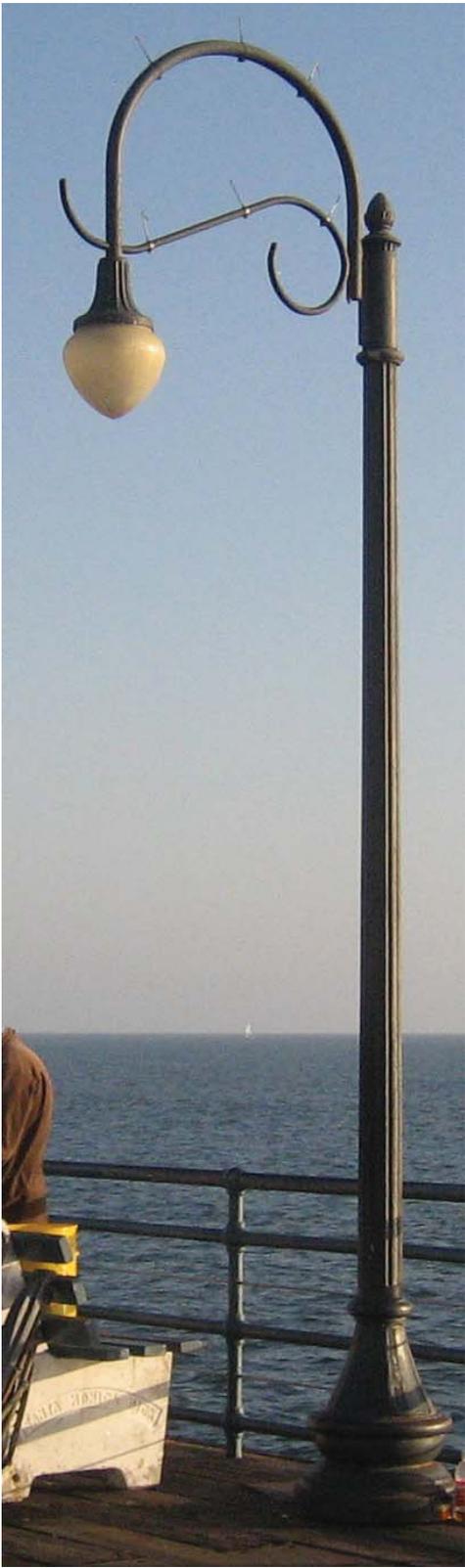


Figure 9, Decorative arched pole



Figure 10, Task lights to be added to the decorative poles

lights

The Assessment of Existing Conditions revealed that there were six styles of lights on Santa Monica Pier. The existing decorative arched poles with the acorn light fixtures are not identified as historic elements, but contribute to the classic character of the Pier. To create a cohesive image, remove clutter and improve this important visual element of the Pier, three types of lights are recommended. All lights must provide the Pier staff the ability to control each independently.

a. Decorative arched poles with an acorn light fixture, figure 9, are the primary character defining light element of the Pier. Figure 1 illustrates the locations for ninety seven new lights on the twelve foot tall poles at thirty eight foot spacing around the entire pier perimeter.

This light serves pedestrians and the light fixtures, see the *Infrastructure Upgrades* volume of the *Santa Monica Pier Assessment*. The original manufacturer of the existing lights has not been determined. Replacement of a matching pole and fixture is feasible and should be conducted carefully to achieve the desired character. The recommended manufacturer is Sitelink by Holophane.

b. Task lights, figure 10, should be placed on the decorative arched poles with three to five spot lights adjustable to illuminate specific features, i.e. fishing areas, boat launch, performance areas, etc. Figure 1 recommends twenty nine locations.

c. Parking lot lights should be replaced on the Newcomb Pier. The lighting study of the *Infrastructure Upgrades* recommends a twenty five foot tall pole, spaced eighty feet on center along the pier perimeter to provide maximum flexibility to program events on the Newcomb deck. It is estimated that fifteen poles, located on figure 1, will provide sufficient illumination.

d. Necklace Lights currently trim the edge of the pier. It was recommended that the existing lights be replaced with 750 energy efficient LED fixtures, at five feet on center, vandal resistant marine grade with cast housing, high impact lens and gasketed cast lens guard as manufactured by Cole Lighting. The estimated cost exceeded the budget. See the "Lighting Study" for alternatives considered.

special features



Figure 11, Bicycle rack

a. Bicycle racks are currently on the Pier, but underutilized because of their inconvenient locations. While bicycle riding is not encouraged on the Pier due to potential conflicts with pedestrians, bikes are recognized as a popular and sustainable mode of transportation for locals. To encourage bicycle access to the Pier new racks are recommended to replace the existing five with additional locations for new bike racks are illustrated on figure 1. The galvanized steel ‘Wave’ rack is recommended, figure 11, each securing up to eight bikes, as manufactured by Bike Security Racks Co.



Figure 12, Bollard

b. Security barriers, currently sited, are large three foot by three foot wooden boxes now serve as bollards to designate pedestrian areas and vehicle areas. It is recommended that the wooden boxes be removed and replaced with 127 fixed and 14 removable bollards. Model “San Francisco”, as manufactured by Urban Accessories, figure 12, spaced eight feet on-center and located as shown on figure 1. These cast aluminum furnishings should be powder coated by the manufacturer in RAL color system 5002 to match other furnishings.

c. **Gazebos** have been part of the Pier for over 15 years. The two decorative gazebos are located on the south rail of the Pier. They were designed as performance areas, but are currently underutilized. To encourage use, it is recommended a picnic table is installed in each with a trash receptacle nearby, and a system of colorful fabric to animate the space and discourage bird resting/dropping.

d. **Smoking areas** are currently designated and maintained on the Pier, figure 1.

The existing eight ash urns should be replaced with eight surface mounted, powdercoated (RAL color system 5002) aluminum ash urns, model Grenadier as manufactured by Landscapeforms, figure 13.

The deck of the smoking areas should be a solid surface to keep burning items away from the wood Pier. Instead of the existing painted plywood, it is recommended that a four foot by eight foot deck of tightly set recycled plastic lumber, one inch thick (or less) by six inches wide, tongue and groove, a medium dark brown color, is installed directly on the wood Pier.

It is recommended that the environmental graphics program direct smokers to the designated areas.



Figure 13, Ash Urn



Figure 14, Interpretive Panel, by Mortar & Ink

e. **Signage** is an important interface between the public and the facilities of the Pier, as well as key to the identity of the public places, the merchants and shop owners. Signage for individual tenants and merchants are required to follow the Architectural Design Guidelines. These recommendations are for the public signs.

The Assessment of Existing Conditions found recently installed signs that provide consolidated information about rules and regulations that apply to the Pier. However other signage on the Pier is inconsistent in its character, quality, message and placement.

A comprehensive environmental graphics program should be developed to direct the replacement and addition of signage on the Santa Monica Pier. The graphics program should be based on what and how information is delivered. It should include an interpretive program addressing cultural resources, natural history, and functions of the pier. The graphics program should coordinate the character of interpretive signage with that needed for directional and regulatory information. The solution should serve the Pier for fifteen to twenty years allowing an amount of flexibility with high quality materials located to minimize clutter and focus the message to the public.

The historic information displayed near the police sub-station at the west end of the Pier may be more effectively displayed in a series of panels along the railing, see figure 14. Porcelain enamel is recommended for interpretive signs. This technique and use of materials is proven to hold up well in the ocean climate and deliver hi-quality graphic detail. The size could vary within the system. Figure 1 identifies up to eight potential locations for interpretive information.

Regulatory and directional components may be aluminum to fit within the city's signage program.

The existing information kiosk is a helpful and attractive element, figure 15. Two additional kiosks are recommended as located on figure 1.



Figure 15, Kiosk



Centennial anniversary signage should be considered temporary, unless it can be included in the comprehensive environmental graphics program. To assist in the efficient and effectiveness of a temporary program the PRC should consider:

- Defining the identity of the year long event;
- Building on the City's environmental signage program and production capabilities;
- Utilizing materials that can be recycled appropriately; and
- Engaging local sponsors.



f. Performance areas are managed by the SMPRC, figure 1. These open spaces along the edge of the Pier, between the emergency vehicle access path and the railing. These sites should be marked with a painted white star on the wood deck as defined by the environmental graphics program.

g. Vendor carts are managed by the City of Santa Monica in locations shown on figure 1. They are marked on the deck with a painted white “T”.

carousel building roof

Historic photos of the Santa Monica Looff Hippodrome (Carousel Building) show the elegant curved funnel shaped roof rising to the central 'onion dome' on a cupola. The perimeter of the building has octagonal shaped turrets at the corners of the building. The northeast corner is wider and taller than the other three. Each of the turrets may have had a viewing deck on the flat roofs with a railing. Three dome shaped features were equally spaced along the roofline of each façade.

The Santa Monica Looff Hippodrome building is listed National Historic Landmark, National Register Number: 87000766.

Statement of Significance (as of designation - February 27, 1987):

The principal historic element of the formerly extensive collection of amusement facilities at the Santa Monica (Looff) Amusement Pier, this is a rare, intact example of an early shelter structure built (1916) to house a carousel in an amusement park and the better preserved of the two such structures that remain on the West Coast.

<http://tps.cr.nps.gov/nhl/detail.cfm?ResourceId=1979&ResourceType=Building>



Currently the metal funnel roof rises out of a flat roof with the wood cupola sitting on top. Missing is the ‘onion dome’ cupola roof, the railing around the perimeter of the turret roofs and the twelve dome shaped features.

The 1987 Design guidelines note that the Carousel Building was “already restored”, page 56. The graphics of the design guidelines do not indicate the reconstruction of the ‘onion dome’ or the dome shaped features around the building perimeter.



Construction plans and specifications for Roofing and Cupola Replacement were prepared in 1997 by Pugh Scarpa Kodama. They call for the removal of the existing flat roof portion to the underlying curved sheathing. They do not address the dome shaped features around the building perimeter.

The City of Santa Monica’s Landmarks Commission adheres to the National Park Service—Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. Decisions and agreement concerning the Carousel Building roof should be confirmed prior to further action.

Recommendations:

1. Confirm specific elements to be reconstructed to meet the Santa Monica Landmark Commission’s requirements and agreements to maintain the National Historic Landmark status of the building.
2. Update the Roofing and Cupola Replacement Plans to meet current building and safety codes and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards (including, but not limited to, the restoration of the turrets, addition of perimeter dome shaped features if necessary).