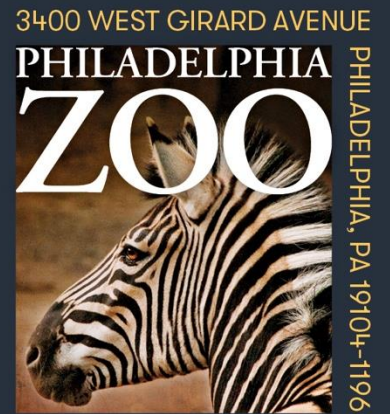


August 25, 2025

Alex M. Smith
Director of the Philadelphia Art Commission
Art and Design Division Manager
Department of Planning & Development
City of Philadelphia



RE: Cover Letter for Ferris Wheel Project at the Philadelphia Zoo

Dear Alex,

The Philadelphia Zoo is exploring a temporary installation of a Ferris Wheel as part of the 2026 celebration. We would like to request a concept review of the project at the September 10, 2025 meeting of the Art Commission.

Philadelphia Zoo Overview

Founded in 1859 as America's first zoo, the Philadelphia Zoo has engaged multiple generations of Philadelphia families with wildlife from around the world, while providing an oasis within our bustling city and a safe place to enjoy the natural world. For many of our guests, the Zoo is their first opportunity to experience the diversity and splendor of the animal kingdom. We leverage this moment of wonder to educate our guests on the characteristics of these fascinating animals, the threats to the existence of so many animal species in the wild, and the often simple changes we can make in our daily routines to preserve the natural resources these animals – and all of us – depend on. A visit to the Zoo is a joyful experience that brings people of all ages and backgrounds together, expanding their view of the world and their commitment to making it a better place.

Ferris Wheel Project Description

In celebration of the City's 250th anniversary in 2026, the Philadelphia Zoo is planning to add a new yet nostalgic experience, 110-foot Ferris Wheel that rises dramatically against the skyline. The Ferris Wheel is designed as a sleek and modern ride with soft lighting that will create a magical glow across West Philadelphia. The Ferris Wheel will be situated at the Zoo's WildWorks welcome plaza and can be operational day and night with easy access to parking along 34th Street and Girard Avenue. With 24 gondolas, guests will experience stunning views across the City that captivates and creates lasting memories. The Zoo plans to activate the Ferris Wheel in addition to opening the new Carey Bear Country in 2026, providing a unique destination for the hundreds of thousands of visitors coming to Philadelphia.

By connecting people with animals,
PHILADELPHIA ZOO
creates joyful discovery and inspires
action for wildlife and habitats

philadelphiazoo.org



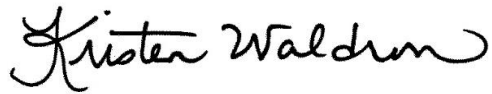
Person to receive the Commission's Decision:

Kristen Waldron
Chief Integrated Operations Officer
Philadelphia Zoo
3400 West Girard Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19104-1196
Email: waldron.kristen@phillyzoo.org

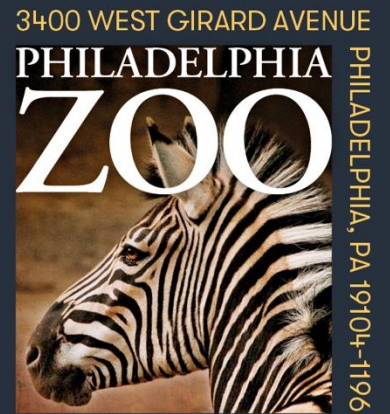
Contact Person:

Kristen Waldron
Chief Integrated Operations Officer
Philadelphia Zoo
3400 West Girard Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19104-1196
Email: waldron.kristen@phillyzoo.org

Sincerely,



Kristen Waldron
Chief Integrated Operations Officer
The Philadelphia Zoo



Philadelphia Zoo Proposed Ferris Wheel September 2025



Location for Ferris Wheel Activation

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Existing Site at the Plaza

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Ferris Wheel Overview

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- Opportunity for LumiNature and 250th City Celebration in 2026
- Temporary installation to pilot success
- Currently at Brookfield Zoo and Indianapolis Children's Museum
- Lights up at night
- Activation outside of Zoo hours/operation
- Site Work will be made on electrical; removal of some of the Channel 6 ZooBalloon bollards and pit.





Ferris Wheel Experience

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- As you approach the Ferris Wheel, its sleek, modern design rises dramatically against the skyline. The wheel's vibrant cabins stand out against the steel frame, and soft lighting begins to glow as evening sets in.
- The welcoming plaza around the wheel is filled with excitement, with guests snapping photos and queuing up to board. The smooth hum of the wheel in motion adds to the anticipation, while the cabins offer stunning views for those ready to take the ride.
- Everything about the Ferris Wheel is designed to captivate and create lasting memories. All guests will enter and exit on the front side.
- Ferris Wheel is approximately a seven minute ride



Ferris Wheel Aesthetics and Lighting

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- Ferris wheel has a white finish on it with metal railings and a wood style decking.
- The Ferris Wheel lighting is a RGB LED system that runs a multicolored pattern. It's manually turned on and off by the operators.



Ferris Wheel By the Numbers

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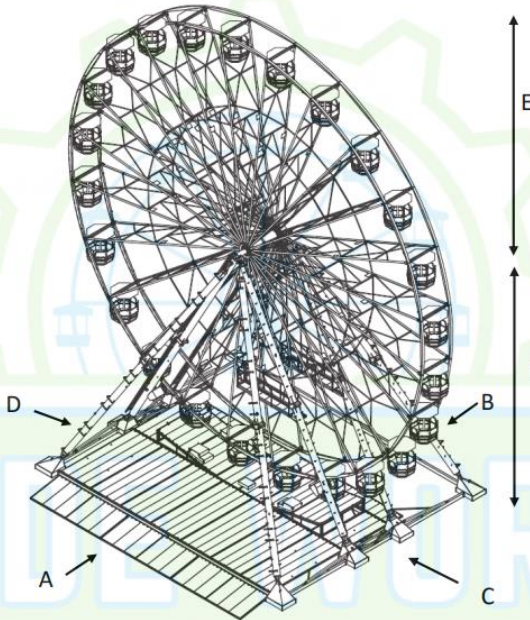
- Number of Gondolas: 24
- Rotation Velocity: 2.6 RPM (Revolutions per minute)
- Wheel Diameter: 97 feet
- Height of the Rotation Shaft: 58 feet
- Total Height of the Ferris Wheel: 106 feet
- Weight: 125,000 pounds
- Loading Requirements Maximum Passenger Load per Gondola: 6 persons (up to 1,000 pounds total)
- Maximum Total Passenger Load: 144 passengers



Ferris Wheel Entry Ramp

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1. Orientation



The illustration shows the orientation of the Ferris wheel.

| | | |
|----------|----------|-----------|
| A: Front | C: Right | E: Top |
| B: Rear | D: left | F: Bottom |

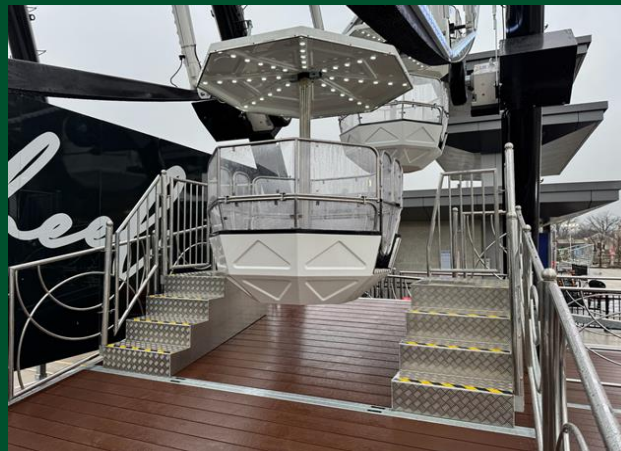
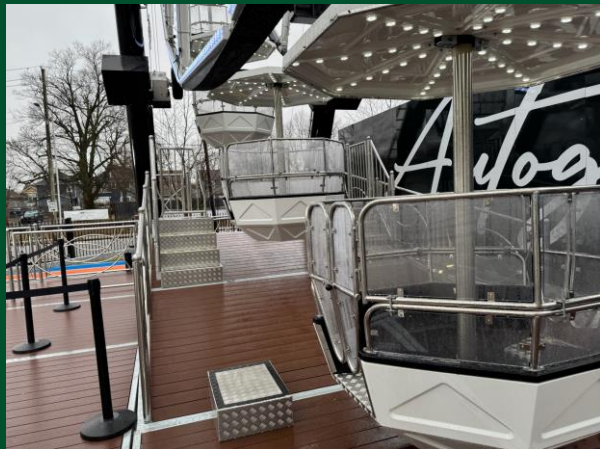
Dimensions including the Walk-Up Ramp for Guests:

- Height: 112 feet with the ramp
- Diameter: 106 feet
- Ferris Wheel Base Dimensions:
 - Depth: 60 feet
 - Width: 65 feet
- Passenger Cabins: Enclosed cabins, each designed for comfort and safety.
- Ticket Booth: Located on the platform within the base area, providing easy access for guests and ensuring a smooth ticketing experience.

Ferris Wheel Branding Opportunities

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- For branding that moves with the crowd, the gondola saddle panels offer one of the most flexible and visually engaging advertising opportunities on the RL33 Observation Wheel.
- Each of the 24 gondolas features 12 individual triangular panels on its exterior—totaling 288 customizable surfaces across the entire wheel.
- These 12-inch triangles are perfect for logos, brand patterns, or sequential designs that wrap around each cabin, creating a dynamic, rotating visual that captures attention from every direction.







Ferris Wheel Wayfinding and Signage

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Ferris Wheel



RESTROOMS



ZOOSHOP

EXIT



Reptile and
Amphibian
House



KidZooU



RESTROOMS

BARNYARD



Impala Plaza



BIG SQUEEZE
LEMONADE



Ferris Wheel Q and A

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