

BAY SKYWAY AND WEST OAKLAND LINK

Connecting the East Bay with San Francisco



BAY AREA TRAILS COLLABORATIVE

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Connecting two of the Bay Area's largest job and population centers, the 4.5-mile Oakland- San Francisco Bay Bridge is one of the busiest commuting corridors in the country. In September 2013, a multiuse path was completed along the eastern span of the bridge and, currently, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) and Bay Area Toll Authority (BATA) are working to complete a bicycling and pedestrian path along the bridge's 2.9-mile western span to provide connectivity between downtown San Francisco, West Oakland, and Yerba Buena and Treasure Islands. Concurrently, MTC and the City of Oakland are working to connect Mandela Parkway to the bridge's eastern span via a 6,000-foot-long elevated multiuse path that will weave through existing freeways, railways and industrial areas. The goal is to provide a sustainable, affordable, scenic and stress-free commute option for trans-Bay commuters eager to bypass peak-hour car, bus and train traffic. Ultimately, the new trail has the potential to simultaneously increase bicycle mode share and decrease the number of total vehicle miles traveled along the corridor at peak hours.

The Bay Skyway and West Oakland Link would be segments of the San Francisco Bay Trail. Once complete, the San Francisco Bay Trail will be a continuous 500-mile bicycling and walking path that circumnavigates the entire San Francisco Bay—passing through 47 cities and all nine Bay Area counties, and across seven toll bridges. More than half the length of the shoreline Bay Trail has been developed, connecting neighborhoods, schools, parks and transit centers, and providing a unique active-transportation experience for the region's nearly 8 million residents.

The Bay Skyway and West Oakland Link comprise one of 12 projects that the Bay Area Trails Collaborative has prioritized as critical to completing its 2,600-mile regional trail network. The Bay Area Trails Collaborative is a Rails to Trails Conservancy TrailNation™ project—a nationwide initiative to create model trail networks that demonstrate the powerful impact trails have on communities.



Rendering of the Bay Skyway along the West Span of the Bay Bridge | Photo courtesy ARUP

PROJECT DATA

- **Total Project Miles:** 4.0
- **Total Project Miles:** 2.9 (West Span) and 1.1 (West Oakland Link)
- **Miles Completed to Date:** 0
- **Total Project Cost:** \$550 Million (West Span) and \$100 Million (West Oakland Link)
- **Funds Secured for This Segment:** \$26 Million (for the West Oakland Link)

For the West Span, approximately \$12 million has been invested in planning, engineering and preliminary environmental review. An additional \$6 million has been secured to finish environmental clearance. Design has also started for the Yerba Buena Island Multiuse Path that will connect the Bay Skyway to Treasure Island, and \$400 million was invested to bring a pathway to the eastern span connecting the East Bay.



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PROJECT ACTION PLAN

In March 2020, MTC and BATA staff were directed by the BATA Oversight Committee to develop a feasibility study to fund, design and construct the Bay Skyway, including its Oakland and Yerba Buena Island and Treasure Island approaches. State and federal environmental analysis, the next step in the Phase 2 project, may be completed in 2024. If funding is secured, Phase 2 could open as early as 2030. The West Oakland Link project currently entails the finalization of a NEPA review, public engagement and detailed design work.

TRANSFORMATIVE IMPACT

Expanding Commuter Choices: As the crow flies, the downtowns of San Francisco and Oakland are a mere 6 miles apart; yet there are currently no direct routes to walk or bike between the two job-and-housing-rich cities. The Bay Skyway will provide new transportation options for trans-Bay commuters fed up with traffic congestion and overcrowded transit.

Electric bikes and bikeshare systems will further accelerate the trans-Bay commute shift, providing new ways for residents to access jobs, schools and businesses on either side of the Bay.

Congestion Relief: The Bay Skyway will increase trans-Bay capacity without adding a single car, train or bus to the already congested bridge and tunnel. Projections show peak-hour demand in 2040 on the trans-Bay corridor at 150% of capacity, due in large part to the anticipated 25,000 new Treasure Island residents and 86,000 new San Francisco jobs. The number of peak-hour, weekday bike and e-bike commuters is forecast to equal roughly a half-lane of vehicle capacity—or 1,700 people per peak-hour—by 2040, not including tourists or reverse bicycle commuters. This would also lessen the air pollution burden felt by West Oakland's community.

Affordable Access to Cultural, Recreational and Job Opportunities: A complete trans-Bay bicycle and pedestrian path will create an affordable transportation option for low-income East Bay residents seeking access to San Francisco's living-wage job market. The path will also provide affordable access to San Francisco's myriad shops, restaurants, museums, parks and tourist attractions. Within a half-mile of West Oakland Link, there are seven communities of concern, 66 acres of parks/open space, more than 2,300 jobs at major employment hubs, and three schools.

PROJECT CONTACT

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