

# The San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge



*New east span opened  
September 2, 2013.*

*Photo: Barrie Rokeach*

The opening of the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge in 1936, and the Golden Gate Bridge in 1937, forever changed the local economy and transportation habits of the Bay Area, allowing easier travel to new places for work and recreation.

The Bay Bridge is really two bridges, one between Yerba Buena Island and Oakland, the other between the Island and San Francisco. Electric trains travelled on the lower bridge deck until 1962.

*San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge*

*Photo: Library of Congress*



*Damage from the 1989  
Loma Prieta Earthquake.*

*Photo: Jack Smith*

The Loma Prieta Earthquake caused a portion of the upper east span deck to fail, providing a wake-up call: if a 6.9 earthquake centered sixty miles away could cause such damage, imagine what a 7.3 earthquake on the Hayward Fault centered only six miles away could do! There were many years of planning a new, seismically secure suspension bridge for the east span. Built between 2002 and 2013, it cost around \$6.5 billion—many times more than the \$250 million originally estimated. Now over 100 million vehicles per year cross over this iconic landmark.