

A Shoreline Stroll

Length: 2.9 miles

Time: An hour and a half at a stroll (or 20 minutes at a Shoreline Sprint)

Difficulty: 1

Elevation Gain: 49 feet

Starting Point: University Avenue below Highway 80, at the San Francisco Bay Trail

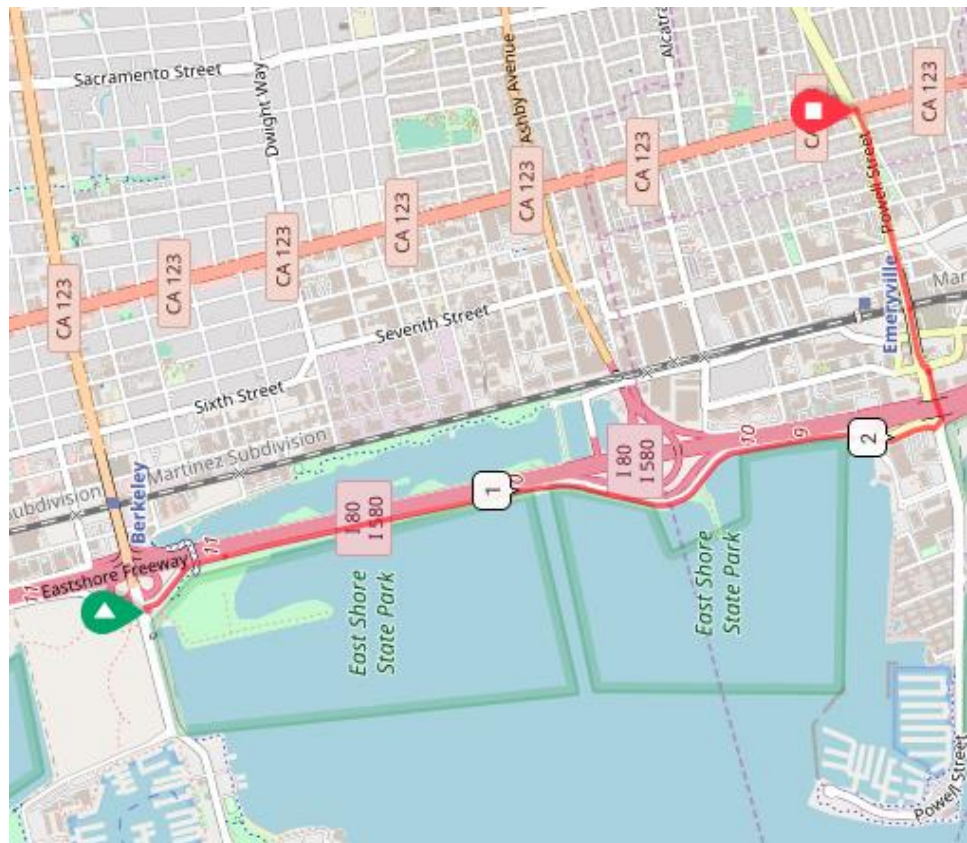
Ending Point: Powell Street at San Pablo Avenue

Transportation:

AC transit buses 51B, 26, 72R, 72M, 72 stop at the start and/or finish, and can be used to connect the two. Otherwise, turn back at the two-mile mark for a four mile out-and-back walk. Parking is available off of University just below the start.

Overview:

This a nice, easy stroll that is almost all along the shoreline of lovely San Francisco Bay, complete with enchanting pocket beaches that contain all manner of driftwood. It's a good walk to do with young children, or friends whom you hope to introduce to hiking. From the Berkeley Marina all the way to Powell Street all you have to do is keep the Bay on right, watch the kite surfers fall into the frigid water, and stroll.



Directions and pictures:

This scenic stroll begins at the 51B bus stop where University Avenue intersects with West Frontage Rd. and the San Francisco Bay Bike Trail. Begin hiking south, toward the impressively arched Pedestrian bridge. The bushes nearby are abundant with invasive (but delicious) Himalayan blackberry. Soon, the trail emerges from the bushes and the walk takes on its characteristic shoreline nature. There are numerous pocket beaches visible as you amble south, which are excellent places for sitting down on the sand (but not on the splintery driftwood!), and watching kite boarders and wind surfers flit across the Bay, or crash into the frigid water. The beaches here are overflowing with ice-plant, an invasive, edible plant from South Africa that has completely taken over Northern California's coastline. Though the ice-plant is edible, it is not suggested that you actually eat it, as it has a similar texture to plastic.

All too soon, the lovely Bay Trail nears the high rises that have dominated the horizon since the Berkeley Marina. The path quickly morphs into a sidewalk, and your views of blue water are replaced by those of gas stations and hotels. If you feel like a longer stroll, turn back here to return to the start the same way you came. Otherwise, after a block you will reach a stoplight where you can cross Powell Street; do so, then turn left, under Interstate 80. After crossing Shellmound Avenue, walk East on Powell Street through commercial areas. The huge mall complex known as Bay Street is built over an Ohlone burial site, where shell mounds as tall as sixty feet once scraped the sky.

From here, you can catch AC Transit 26 to MacArthur BART, or continue east on Powell Street to the 72 stop on San Pablo Avenue. This bus will take you back to University, a short way above the walk's start.

Right: One rocky section of the shoreline along which you have strolled or will stroll

