

# **EMBARCADERO (SAN FRANCISCO), WHERE THERE USED TO BE A FREEWAY....**

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On the [Onésimo Flores](#) I discover a video which can illustrate one of the great debates we've had around here lately. In the post [Hardware and software, a country full of empty highways](#), in which one of the collateral issues was the possible **conversion of large urban infrastructures into public spaces recovered for other uses**. There he mentioned some cases such as the [High Line](#) in New York, [Parco Solare Sud](#) in Calabria (Italy) or the [Cheonggyecheon Restoration Project](#), in Korea South.

A few months ago, in a post like [San Francisco, a city on the bay](#), [Urban serendipity #6: San Francisco \(USA\). Mission neighborhood](#) or [Urban Serendipity #5: San Francisco \(USA\) Educating Cities](#), I left some notes on the blog about the impression that visiting this Californian city caused me. One of the things that in the end I could not comment "hot" but that impressed me the most was the waterfront of the city in the area of [Embarcadero](#) and to [Marina](#) and the [Golden Gate National Recreation Area](#). And with the video you mentioned, I discover that in reality all of that area **was occupied until the end of the eighties of the last century by a highway** with elevated lanes that served as a wall between the city and its coast. However, the 1989 earthquake severely damaged this infrastructure and this provided an opportunity to renovate this area and rethink it to give it other uses. [Here](#) and [here](#) you have more information about it.

So we have another example of how to recover space in the city by eliminating obsolete infrastructure and gaining spaces for coexistence, green areas for free use and a better integration of transport into the urban fabric. Being in the city, it is surprising precisely that the use of most of this area is public, and one thinks about how juicy such a spacious waterfront can be. Although it is true that the part dedicated to commercial uses in the dock area -such as the [Pier 39](#)- It looks a bit like cardboard in its design, in general I thought it was a luxury that a city can have an open space of these dimensions and, above all, that it can connect with an even more surprising place, the park that leads to the golden Gate, a vast green area that leads to the famous bridge, demonstrating the value that maintaining open spaces for public use can have for a city.

The video is from [Street films](#), an initiative of the organization [Open Plans](#), which we talked about a while ago and which is generating very accurate audiovisual materials on everything that has to do with transportation, recovery of public spaces, etc.

*Photo. Embarcadero Freeway and Ferry Building, circa 1960. Source: Telstar Logisitics, taken from [CNU](#).*

**There are no comments yet.**