

intersections in question, thus [holding up the project and forcing expensive mitigation measures](#) (primarily an additional station near the schools to slow the train).

As a result, a projected four-year construction period dragged on to six years, while the cost surged forty percent over the initial estimate to [\\$930 million](#). And this brief history does not even include the brutal local opposition to the line that kept it from getting built for fifteen years after the county purchased the right-of-way.

While the construction challenges are now mostly in the past for Expo, they represent an important lesson for rail advocates in California, including High Speed Rail proponents. For example, the Brown Administration has [reportedly been in discussion](#) with environmental groups about streamlining environmental review for the system. But as the Expo history demonstrates, faster CEQA/NEPA review won't necessarily help the line get built any faster (although it could at least get construction started sooner). High Speed Rail will face the same complicated thicket of local government land use policies, myriad state and local agencies, and broader federal environmental laws that helped slow Expo down at various points in its history. The CPUC process alone probably cost Expo two years worth of delays.

All this is to say that if Expo seemed like a long wait, Californians may not see High Speed Rail until my son starts qualifying for senior citizen discounts.