

California nixes plans for high-speed LA-SF rail line

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A model of the high speed "Fuxing" bullet train made by Chinese rail giant CRRC is on display at Innotrans, the railway industry's largest trade fair, in Berlin on September 19, 2018.

California Governor Gavin Newsom announced on Tuesday that he was

abandoning plans to build a high-speed rail line between Los Angeles and San Francisco, citing the high cost and the time it would take.

"Let's be real," the newly elected Newsom said in his first State of the State address. "The project, as currently planned, would cost too much and take too long.

"There's been too little oversight and not enough transparency."

Newsom said he planned to concentrate instead on completing a high-speed rail link between the central and more rural towns of Merced and Bakersfield to reinvigorate the region's economy.

"I know that some critics will say this is a 'train to nowhere'," he said. "But that's wrong and offensive.

"The people of the Central Valley endure the worst air pollution in America as well as some of the longest commutes," he added. "And they have suffered too many years of neglect from policymakers here in Sacramento. They deserve better."

Plans for an LA-San Francisco bullet train had been backed by Newsom's predecessors Jerry Brown and Arnold Schwarzenegger and the line was expected to be completed in 2033, years behind schedule.

The rail service was intended to decongest key airports and highways that have reached saturation points in the most populous and richest state in the nation.

The 520-mile journey would take less than three hours.

The project, however, has run into repeated delays and legal challenges. An initial estimated cost of about \$40 billion when voters first approved

the project in 2008 has ballooned to \$77 billion.

Construction on the [rail line](#) began in 2015 in Fresno under Phase One, and since then crews have been working on 119-mile (191-kilometer) stretch in the Central Valley.

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