



AMTRAK/FEC CORRIDOR COALITION

Seeking to restore passenger service, in the form of Amtrak, on the Florida East Coast rail corridor from Jacksonville to West Palm Beach, and south to Miami

KICKOFF MEETING

Friday, March 26, 2010
10 AM

Cocoa City Hall
(65 Stone Street; Cocoa, FL 32922)

AGENDA

- | | | |
|------|---|--|
| I. | Welcome & Introductions | Doug Smith, Commissioner
<i>Martin County Board of County Commissioners</i> |
| II. | National Amtrak Rail Program | Todd Stennis, Director - Government Affairs South
<i>Amtrak</i> |
| III. | State Rail Program | Stephanie Kopelousos, Secretary
<i>Florida Department of Transportation</i> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Passenger Rail Enterprise• Florida Rail Enterprise<ul style="list-style-type: none">- High Speed Rail Update- Commuter Rail Update- Intercity Passenger Rail• Amtrak/FEC Corridor Project<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Project Overview- Funding- Project Timeframe | |
| IV. | Amtrak "Station Cities" Update | Update by Individual City Representatives |
| V. | Open Discussion | |
| VI. | Next Steps | |

For those unable to attend the meeting in person, a Conference Call Bridge teleconference has been arranged.
All call-in participants must mute their telephones to enable the call to work properly.

Call-in Number: (321) 433-8878
Conference ID: 1201
Access Code: 147258

During the meeting, questions and comments can be emailed to kdelaney@terpc.org, and every effort will be made to present them to the speakers during the meeting.



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KICKOFF MEETING ~ MARCH 26, 2010 ~ MEETING SUMMARY

The meeting was called to order just after 10 AM by Doug Smith, Martin County Chair and member of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council. There were approximately 150 people in attendance. A list of represented congressional and legislative offices, local governments, agencies, organizations, businesses, and others is included with this summary. Mr. Smith thanked the City of Cocoa for hosting the meeting and providing refreshments.

Mr. Smith welcomed the participants, noting his long involvement in the Amtrak/FEC Corridor project since it was initially proposed by Amtrak and FDOT in 2001. Mr. Smith noted the purpose of the meeting was to provide a forum for local governments, agencies, organizations, and the public to collectively discuss the Amtrak/FEC Corridor project with representatives of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Amtrak, Rail America/FEC, cities along the corridor, and others.

It was noted the meeting was organized by the four regional planning councils along Florida's east coast, including the North Florida Regional Council (NFRC), East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (ECFRPC), Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRCP), and South Florida Regional Planning Council (SFRPC).

Mr. Smith presented a brief overview of the Flagler railroad and history of passenger rail service in Florida, including an overview of historic stations in the eight subject station locations (St. Augustine, Daytona Beach, Titusville, Cocoa, Melbourne, Vero Beach, Fort Pierce, and Stuart). In 1957, the FEC Railroad serviced 86 stations between Jacksonville and Miami; however, passenger service on the FEC was discontinued in 1968. Mr. Smith then described the proposed Amtrak service on the FEC Corridor, with interconnections in Jacksonville (between the CSX and FEC), West Palm Beach (between the CSX and FEC), and in Miami at the Miami Intermodal Center. Mr. Smith noted that support for the project continues to grow, with more than 133 resolutions and letters of support from a wide range of cities, agencies, and others, and a newly-established Facebook page. Finally, Mr. Smith emphasized TCRPC's twenty-year prioritization and commitment to the restoration of passenger rail on the FEC.



The map above illustrates the general alignment for the Amtrak/FEC Corridor project, which proposes to reintroduce passenger rail service on the FEC Corridor from Jacksonville to West Palm Beach, with service continuing south to Miami.

Mr. Smith then introduced Todd Stennis, Government Affairs Director for Amtrak, who provided an overview of Amtrak's national service and partnerships with fifteen states, noting Amtrak's desire for Florida to become the agency's sixteenth state partner. Mr. Stennis discussed Amtrak's current service in Florida, which carries nearly one million riders annually, and compared Florida's service to California, where Amtrak ridership is nearly eleven million in addition to Amtrak's provision of commuter and other passenger

services in the state. Mr. Stennis noted the current administration's increased financial and policy support for transit generally and Amtrak specifically, with billions of dollars now available to expand intercity and high-speed rail service across the nation. Mr. Stennis emphasized Amtrak's strong interest in partnering with the state for a stimulus funding application to enable the FEC Corridor service; however, he also noted there were several challenges needing resolution prior to an application submittal. Key among these were the need to finalize negotiations with the FEC and the need to resolve the current liability indemnification issues created by Florida's recently adopted rail legislation in December 2009.

Of particular interest and discussion was an announcement by Mr. Stennis that Amtrak intended to run an "inspection train" along the FEC corridor in late April or May. He indicated discussions were underway with FEC, and more details would be available over the next few weeks.

Mr. Smith then introduced FDOT Secretary Stephanie Kopelousos, who provided an overview of the state's rail program, including high-speed rail, commuter rail, and intercity passenger rail.

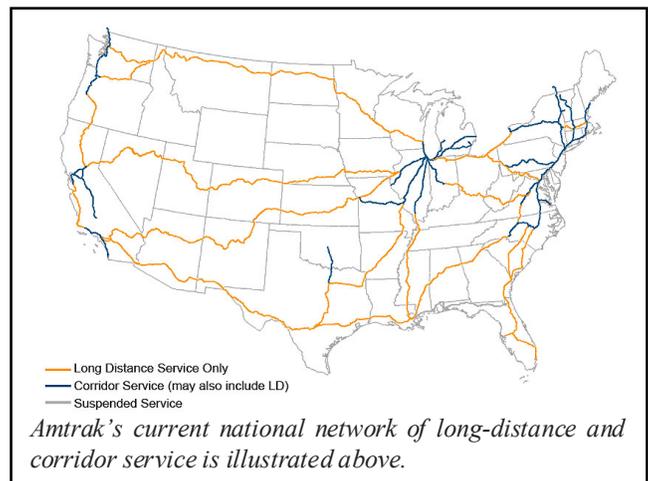
She noted the state's long-standing support of the Amtrak/FEC Corridor project, dating back to the project's first introduction in 2001. The Secretary described the FDOT's extensive work in preparing the ARRA application for high speed / intercity passenger rail funds in 2009. Although the first funds from that program were awarded to the Tampa/Orlando segment of Florida's high speed rail program, Secretary Kopelousos emphasized the state's strong commitment to resubmitting the Amtrak/FEC project for the next round of funding under the same program, with updated program guidance anticipated in late March and applications likely due in the Summer of 2010. The Secretary noted that FDOT discussions with the Federal Railroad Administration indicated the project was strongly considered for funding; however, additional environmental work was necessary for it to be successfully funded. Consequently, FDOT staff had already initiated the "advance notification" for the agency's Efficient Transportation Decision-Making process to expedite permitting, and further, FDOT was advancing other environmental and survey activities to improve the project's readiness for funding and construction. The Secretary complimented the large turnout, recommended continued dialogue amongst the coalition, and strongly encouraged cities and project supporters to communicate with legislative and congressional representatives.

Following the presentations were a series of questions and answers related to a broad range of issues, including the level of commitment to the project by the state, possible matching funding requirements for cities receiving stations, timing of the service, liability indemnification, and continued planning and permitting activity by FDOT. The cities of Bunnell and New Smyrna Beach noted their interest in being included for stations along the corridor.

Subsequently, representatives from each of the cities currently planned for stations (St. Augustine, Daytona Beach, Titusville, Cocoa, Melbourne, Vero Beach, Fort Pierce, and Stuart) provided updates as to the evaluation of station locations, relevant planning and development activity, and the benefits a future station would bring to their communities.

Mr. Smith then detailed next steps for the Coalition, including the posting of information on the TCRPC website (www.tcrpc.org), continued dialogue and sharing of information, the need for continued and increased communications with legislative and congressional officials as well as the Governor's office, and a commitment for the RPCs to forward details as available related to the running of the Amtrak train along the corridor as well as other relevant project information.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 PM.



MEETING PARTICIPANTS

There were approximately 150 individuals and entities who participated in the Amtrak/FEC Corridor Coalition Meeting, including (but not limited to) the following legislative and congressional offices, local governments, agencies, businesses, and other groups:

US Representative John Mica, 7th District
US Representative Bill Posey, 15th District
US Representative Tom Rooney, 16th District
US Representative Suzanne Kosmas, 24th District

Florida Representative Ralph Poppell, District 29

Amtrak
Rail America/FEC Railroad
Florida Department of Transportation

North Florida Regional Council
East Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
South Florida Regional Planning Council

St. Johns County
Flagler County
Brevard County
Indian River County
St. Lucie County
Martin County

North Florida TPO
Volusia County MPO
Metroplan Orlando
Space Coast (Brevard) TPO
Indian River MPO
St Lucie TPO
Martin County MPO
Palm Beach MPO
Broward MPO

City of Jacksonville (Duval County)
City of St. Augustine (St. Johns County)
City of Bunnell (Flagler County)
City of Palm Coast (Flagler County)
City of Daytona Beach (Volusia County)
City of New Smyrna Beach (Volusia County)
City of Titusville (Brevard County)
City of Cocoa (Brevard County)
City of Melbourne (Brevard County)
City of Rockledge (Brevard County)
City of Palm Bay (Brevard County)
City of Vero Beach (Indian River County)

City of Fort Pierce (St. Lucie County)
City of Port St. Lucie (St. Lucie County)
City of Stuart (Martin County)
City of Greenacres (Palm Beach County)
City of Wellington (Palm Beach County)

Bruce Tate Banking Systems
Concerned Citizens' Association
Florida Today
Friends of Historic Canal Street
Greater St. Paul Baptist Church
Indian River County Historical Society
Jacksonville Transportation Authority
Lassiter Transportation Group, Inc
Main Street Vero Beach
Marine Discovery Center
Melbourne Regional Chamber
Ocampo & Associates
Ocean Waters
Port Canaveral
St. Johns County Tourist Development Council
St. Lucie Council on Aging
Scripps TC Newspapers
SE Volusia Chamber of Commerce
South Florida Regional Business Alliance
South Florida Regional Transportation Authority
Space Coast Economic Development Commission
Space Coast Association of Realtors
Space Coast Avenue Trust
The Florida Times-Union
Vero Heritage, Inc.
White Challis

*NOTE: This meeting summary was prepared by the
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council.
For more information, please contact Kim DeLaney,
TCRPC Growth Management Coordinator
[\[kdelaney@tcrpc.org\]](mailto:kdelaney@tcrpc.org) or (772) 221-4060
or visit www.tcrpc.org.*

