Florida offers $118M for Jax-Miami passenger rail

South Florida Business Journal - by Mark Szakonyi, Jacksonville Business Journal

Date: Monday, January 3, 2011, 1:52pm EST

The Florida Department of Transportation is proposing to put up $118 million to bring back passenger rail service to the Jacksonville-Miami line if the federal government kicks in the remaining $150 million.

Federal Railroad Administration spokesman Warren Flatau said it is no known when the agency would release a third wave of grant opportunities, according to TCPalm.com, a Treasure Coast and Palm Beaches newspaper.

About $268 million is needed to allow 90 mph Amtrak passenger trains to use the Florida East Coast Railway line, connecting Florida east coast cities that do not receive Amtrak service through the current Miami-Tampa-Orlando-Jacksonville line.

The 351-mile railway line, built by 19th-century tycoon Henry Flagler, ended passenger service in the mid-1960s.