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Train service may return to Daytona

By **EILEEN ZAFFIRO**, Staff Writer

May 12, 2010 12:05 AM [7 Comments](#) [0 Votes](#)

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DAYTONA BEACH -- The last time passenger train service ran through Daytona Beach, Neil Armstrong was still a year away from walking on the moon.

With Amtrak beginning to explore opening a passenger line along Florida's east coast between Jacksonville and Miami, a passenger rail system could be back in Daytona Beach within a few years.

Anyone interested in that rail line proposal is invited to a public meeting at 6 p.m. tonight in City Hall in conference room #149B.

Another public meeting on the Amtrak proposal is slated for 11 a.m. Thursday in the same room at City Hall.

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Earlier this month, Amtrak put a special train on the Florida East Coast Railway railroad tracks to test the feasibility of the idea to run from Jacksonville to Miami. For more than 40 years, those tracks have been used chiefly for freight trains.

The FEC traces its history to railroad and hotel pioneer Henry Flagler. There was passenger service on FEC lines from the late 1800s until 1968, when a labor dispute ended service.

While there has been talk for years of restoring passenger rail service along the state's eastern shore, the idea might have a better chance now with the Obama administration interested in developing a national rail system to connect urban centers. Stops along the line could include St. Augustine, Titusville, Cocoa, Melbourne, Vero Beach, Fort Pierce and Stuart. The new line would link with existing rail passenger service in South Florida and existing stations in West Palm Beach, Delray Beach, Deerfield Beach, Fort Lauderdale, Hollywood and Miami. It would also connect to an existing station in Jacksonville.

There are no stops planned in Flagler County.

It's estimated that it would cost about \$268 million to upgrade the tracks along the line.

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RCC | May 12, 2010 7:59 AM | Reply | Report as Offensive

Just don't let the county or mirabal in on it and it might do good.




Maniac2 | May 12, 2010 8:04 AM | Reply | Report as Offensive

"Exploring the possibility"? I thought this was a done deal! Amtrak has been dangling this carrot in front of our noses for years and it's always 'just a couple of years away'! Yes, train service to Daytona and the Florida east coast would be a great thing. But don't get your hopes up. At the rate this 'plan' is proceeding we all will be dead and buried by the time the first passenger train stops here. This is starting to look like just another one of the hundreds of pipe dreams that Daytona has had for the last 20 years. Remember Bass?



dldfl | May 12, 2010 8:54 AM | Reply | Report as Offensive


What is the problem? The train made down safely. Did it make the trip back? I know why the plan will take so long - NOT enough money has been distributed yet and we have midterm elections.

 Worker | May 12, 2010 9:10 AM | Reply | Report as Offensive

Florida needs some type of transportation system in place. I'm sick of driving all over this state because of the lack of alt. methods. Don't get me started about the "pain in the neck" of Central Florida called I4.

 nativefloridian | May 12, 2010 10:08 AM | Reply | Report as Offensive

I've never been on a train except at Disney. Is the cost cheaper than driving or flying?

 Shovelready | May 12, 2010 1:09 PM | Reply | Report as Offensive

If the political will was there it would happen. Temporary passenger stations could be made from abandoned FEMA trailers and 268 million to upgrade the tracks must be a joke or are all those acid and chlorine tankers passing by daily endangering my life.

 gideon_70 | May 12, 2010 1:20 PM | Reply | Report as Offensive

Holly Hill is the perfect place for a stop. They once had a stop behind the new publix off of Golf Ave, and they could do so again easily. It's a good area, plenty of places to park, and not built up.

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