



## Amtrak reviewing feasibility of passenger rail service from Miami to Jacksonville on FEC

May 3, 8:32 AM · Gene Bowker - Railroad Examiner

Amtrak hosted a special inspection train along the Florida East Coast Railway (FEC) to review the feasibility of passenger rail service on the 351-mile route between Miami and Jacksonville. The train departed from Miami with plans to make brief stops at West Palm Beach, Stuart, Fort Pierce, Vero Beach, Melbourne, Cocoa, Titusville, Daytona Beach, and St. Augustine before arriving at its final destination, Jacksonville.

Accompanying Amtrak's Board Chairman Tom Carper on the train are a number of local elected officials, community leaders, and rail supporters whose goal it is to restore passenger rail service along the route. This corridor, which connects major population centers, has not seen regular passenger service since 1968, three years before the creation of Amtrak.

"An expanding partnership between Amtrak and the states is vital to the future development of passenger rail service along some of our most populous corridors including the east coast of Florida," said Carper. "We look forward to working closely with the Florida Department of Transportation and the Florida East Coast Railway to bring Amtrak service to these communities."

The Florida Department of Transportation in conjunction with local governments, regional planning councils and Rail America, the owner of the FEC, recently submitted an application for federal funds made available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to support this initiative.

As a part of that process, a series of outreach workshops were recently held communities targeted as stops along the route to determine potential station locations. Criteria included station and platform size, available parking, community access, land use compatibility, and cost.



Regular passenger service could return to the East Coast of Florida

Gene Bowker

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