

# TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

## MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members AGENDA ITEM 9

From: Staff

Date: June 15, 2012 Council Meeting

Subject: “All Aboard Florida” Rail Proposal – Presentation by Rafael Rodon, Executive Vice President, Flagler Development/Florida East Coast Industries

### Introduction

The purpose of this item is to provide an opportunity for Council to receive a presentation regarding the “All Aboard Florida” rail proposal recently announced by Florida East Coast Industries (FECI). The proposal represents a private initiative to introduce intercity passenger rail service between southeast Florida and central Florida with four stations: downtown Miami, downtown Fort Lauderdale, downtown West Palm Beach, and Orlando (with a potential connection to the SunRail commuter rail system that is currently under construction). FECI has suggested that the service could ultimately be extended to provide service to Tampa and Jacksonville. A press release from FECI, including a project map, is attached.

According to discussions with representatives of FECI, the company is currently conducting preliminary feasibility analyses addressing engineering feasibility, ridership, and project costs, with preliminary findings anticipated later this summer. The company has noted the “All Aboard Florida” service would not conflict with any currently proposed passenger rail initiatives on the corridor, including the proposed Amtrak/FEC Corridor service as well as future commuter rail service from Palm Beach County to Miami-Dade County.

Mr. Rafael Rodon, Executive Vice President of Flagler Development, will present the overview to Council.

### Recommendation

For informational purposes only.

Attachments



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## **Florida East Coast Industries, Inc. Announces Plans for Private Passenger Rail Service in Florida**

*Nation's First-of-its-Kind Privately Owned and Operated System  
Will Connect Florida's Largest Cities*

**MIAMI (March 22, 2012)** — Florida East Coast Industries, Inc. (FECI), the owner of Florida's premier passenger rail corridor, is developing a privately owned, operated and maintained passenger rail service to connect South Florida and Orlando, which will be operational in 2014. By connecting the most visited city in the United States with South Florida's business and vacation destinations, the passenger rail project, called *All Aboard Florida*, is designed to serve Florida's growing number of business travelers, as well as families and tourists traveling for pleasure.

The *All Aboard Florida* passenger rail project will connect South Florida to Orlando through a 240-mile route combining 200 miles of existing tracks between Miami and Cocoa and the creation of 40 miles of new track to complete the route to Orlando. Eventually the system could be expanded with connections to Tampa and Jacksonville.

More than fifty million people travel between South and Central Florida annually, largely over highly congested highways. *All Aboard Florida* is envisioned to transform the way people travel throughout the state, offering a faster, safer, and more enjoyable mode of transportation between Florida's two largest metropolitan areas.

Targeted to begin service in 2014, the approximately \$1 billion project will operate on a regular schedule throughout the day transporting business and leisure passengers between South Florida and Orlando in approximately three hours. This new, convenient, affordable, fast and environmentally friendly intercity passenger rail service is expected to:

- (1) **CREATE JOBS AND GROW FLORIDA'S ECONOMY**—approximately 6,000 direct jobs will be needed to construct the system and over 1,000 more jobs to operate and maintain it; new economic development opportunities also will be created for communities along the route;
- (2) **PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT**—the service will take millions of vehicles off Florida's roadways, resulting in a reduction in auto emissions and allowing for a far more fuel-efficient alternative to the automobile at this time of escalating gas prices;
- (3) **ENSURE SPEED AND RELIABILITY**—travel time between regions will be approximately three hours and train service will be frequent throughout the day;

(4) PROTECT EXISTING FREIGHT CAPACITY—the new passenger service will not affect freight capacity in the rail corridor, thereby supporting Florida’s role in international commerce and allowing more intermodal freight movements.

By adding an entirely new travel choice, the *All Aboard Florida* passenger rail service will provide a high-quality experience for travelers. The system will include business- and coach-class service with advance purchase reserved seating, gourmet meals, Wi-Fi, and the ability to work productively throughout the entire trip. In addition, stations in Miami, Fort Lauderdale, West Palm Beach and Orlando mean convenient transfers to Metrorail, Metromover or SunRail, allowing passengers to reach their final destination.

FECI began a feasibility analysis for the project several months ago. Additionally, an investment grade ridership study and engineering work to design the system are underway. Today’s announcement marks the beginning of working in depth with local, state and federal officials, as well as the communities along the route.

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**Florida East Coast Industries, Inc. (FECI)**, through its subsidiaries and affiliates, is a major owner and developer of real estate and transportation-related businesses within the State of Florida. Headquartered in Coral Gables, FL, FECI has a rich history dating back over a century when Henry Flagler first established the company and became a pioneer in the development of Florida’s eastern coast. Today, the company owns, manages, develops and leases commercial real estate properties, and its affiliate, the Florida East Coast Railway, L.L.C., owns the railroad over which freight is transported.

***All Aboard Florida*** is an intercity passenger rail project that will connect South Florida to Orlando with intermediate stations in Fort Lauderdale and West Palm Beach. This rail service will give Floridians and visitors a viable transportation alternative to congested highways and airport terminals. *All Aboard Florida* will provide a high-quality experience for passengers and will be the first privately owned, operated, and maintained passenger rail system in the United States.

JACKSONVILLE

ORLANDO

TAMPA

WEST PALM BEACH

FORT LAUDERDALE

MIAMI

# ALL ABOARD FLORIDA

**ALL ABOARD FLORIDA's** roots trace back to Florida trailblazer Henry Flagler, founder of the Florida East Coast Railway and the descendant companies that have provided rail service for over a century.

**100% PRIVATE**

This privately owned, operated and maintained passenger rail service will be running in 2014, at no risk to Florida taxpayers



**6,000 CONSTRUCTION JOBS FOR FLORIDIANS**

An additional 1,000 jobs will be needed to operate the rail service



**50 MILLION TRAVELERS**

The number of annual passengers who can benefit from rail service to travel between South Florida and Orlando in approximately three hours



**\$6+ BILLION\***

The amount of money traffic congestion costs Florida travelers each year due to 274 million hours in travel delays and 216 million excess gallons of fuel consumed

\*2009 annual figures from Texas Transport Institute's 2010 Urban Mobility Report.



**3 MILLION CARS OFF THE ROAD**

Less highway use means taxpayer savings on reduced highway maintenance and repair



Frequent, regularly scheduled round trips daily



Gourmet meals and beverage service



Reserved business- and coach-service seating



Wi-Fi availability



Access to major international airports, seaports and existing commuter rail systems like Metrorail and SunRail