

# SOUTH FLORIDA EAST COAST CORRIDOR TRANSIT ANALYSIS STUDY

FACT SHEET NUMBER 1

WINTER 2009



## PROJECT OVERVIEW

**The South Florida East Coast Corridor Transit Analysis Study (SFECCSTAS)** is evaluating new regional passenger transit services in eastern Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade Counties. These services are necessary to reduce roadway congestion and meet north-south mobility needs in our tri-county region – the most densely populated corridor in Florida and the third most congested in the country. The study area extends along an 85-mile stretch of the Florida East Coast Railroad from Jupiter to Miami.

For more information go to [www.sfecstudy.com](http://www.sfecstudy.com) or call 1-800-330-7444.

## PROJECT PROCESS

The study consists of three phases.

**Phase 1** began September 26, 2005 and was completed in spring 2007. The study included evaluation of a list of transit alternatives which are possible routes, or alignments, for north-south transit. A variety of transit vehicles, called technologies or modes, were also analyzed. Phase 1 concluded by identifying the FEC corridor as the best corridor on which to locate transit and reducing the number of potential technologies to the five most suitable for further analysis. The Conceptual Alternatives Analysis/ Environmental Screening Report (AA/ESR) for Phase 1 was completed.

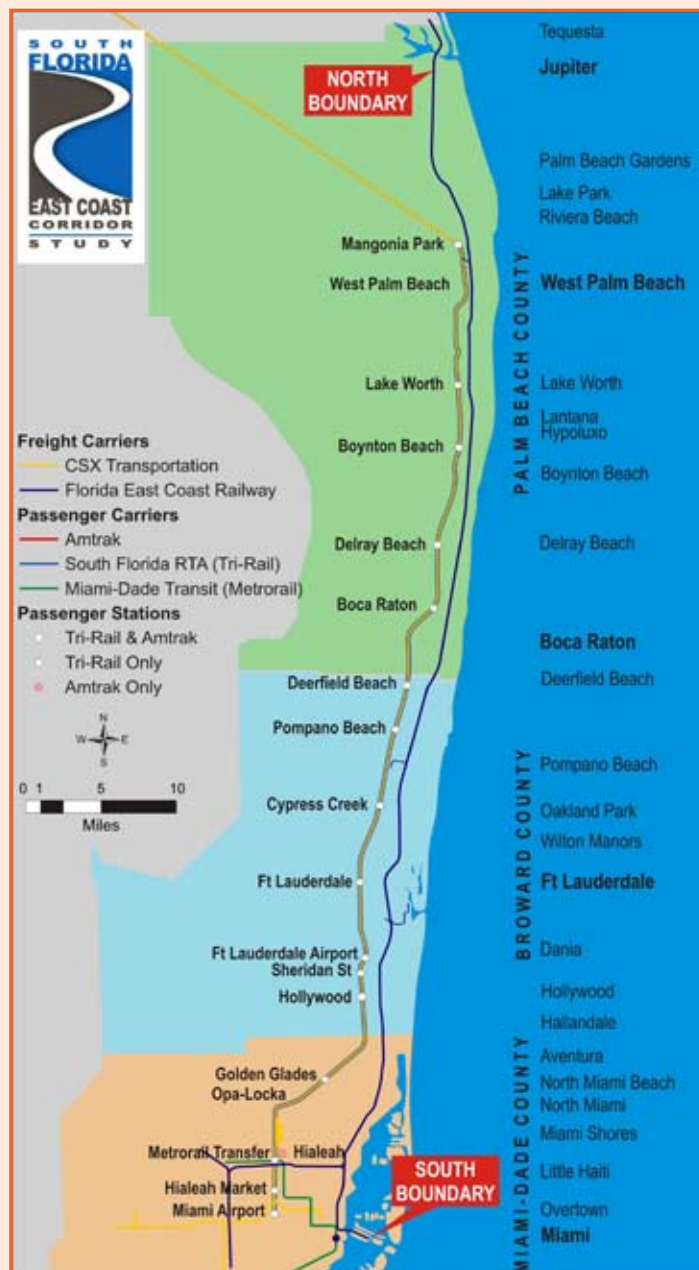
**Phase 2** began in mid-2008. The purpose of Phase 2 is to create a **Master Plan** for the entire corridor resulting in an overall **Locally Preferred Alternative** that defines modes and services on the entire 85-mile segment of the FEC alignment. As part of this phase, various connections between the FEC corridor and the existing Tri-Rail service will be studied in order to create the best possible integrated system serving the greatest number of people in the region with premium transit. The Locally Preferred Alternative will define the service plan, vehicle technology and station locations for the entire system.

**Phase 3** will study individual segments of the corridor in more detail, resulting in a series of projects to advance into design and construction. This phase will conclude with a detailed Locally Preferred Alternative, funding plan and Draft Environmental Impact Statement for each segment.

## PUBLIC INPUT

At every phase of the project, public input is important to the decision-making process. During Phase 2, there will be three major opportunities for community input. The **Kick-Off Meetings** in January and February 2009 are the first of these opportunities. Later in Phase 2, a second round of public workshops will be held to discuss alternatives and Phase 2 will conclude with a Public Hearing.

We need your valuable input on developing the Master Plan during Phase 2!



## Please help us:

- **Decide how to best integrate exiting Tri-Rail and freight service with new FEC service**
- **Select a preferred transit mode or modes**
- **Select general transit station areas and types**
- **Begin to decide how to handle roadway grade crossings**
- **Identify and assess potential environmental and community impacts.**

Each of these topics will be explained in more detail at the Kick-Off Meetings:

**1) Regional Integration:** We are looking at an integrated regional transit system that connects where people live to their destinations, ideally with a direct, high-speed, one seat

ride. This means that we may provide physical connections between the two corridors and therefore need to identify where potential connections should be. We also have to take into consideration freight movement as well as bicycle and pedestrian access needs.

**2) Transit Mode:** We still have five modal technologies from Phase 1 to evaluate. They include • Regional Rail (RGR), similar to Tri-rail • Rail Rapid Transit (RRT), similar to Metro-rail • Light Rail Transit (LRT) • Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), similar to the South Dade Busway • and Regional Bus (RGB). It is possible that the preferred mode may be different on different segments of the project.

**3) Station Areas:** We presented an initial list of potential station areas in Phase 1 and have since expanded the list based on input from your communities to 97 potential locations. In order to create an attractive service, these general station locations will be evaluated and reduced to a more manageable number with your additional input during Phase 2. We also need to consider which “type” of station makes the most sense for each community and the transit system as a whole.

**4) Grade Crossings:** The FEC corridor has many potential highway-transitway crossings that will require careful analysis to ensure a safe and efficient transportation system. We will begin to consider ways to improve/modify crossings and will be looking for your input. Solutions under consideration include closings, grade separations and improved grade crossing protection.

**5) Environmental and Community Impacts:** As we evaluate the various ways to implement an integrated transit system, we will also be looking at how to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts to the environment and to the various communities that are adjacent to the corridor. Mitigation of unavoidable impacts will be preliminarily assessed as well, with your input.



## WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF TRANSIT?

Public transportation can improve the business climate and quality of life in Southeast Florida by providing a wide array of benefits to residents, visitors and business operators, even those who may never board a train or bus. These benefits include:

**Improved Mobility:** Transit use reduces the number of cars on the road, so it can ease traffic congestion in South Florida, some of the worst in the country.



**Stimulates the Economy:** Every \$1 invested in public transportation projects generates approximately \$6 in local economic activity. Every \$10 million of capital investment in public transportation yields an estimated \$30 million increase in sales. Businesses located near public transportation experience more employee reliability with less absenteeism and turnover.

**Job Creation:** Every \$1 billion of investment in transportation infrastructure creates and supports 47,500 jobs.

**Job Access:** Transit provides an affordable and reliable means for commuting to and from work and other destinations.

**Energy Conservation:** Transit ridership reduces fuel consumption, helping reduce our country's dependence on foreign oil.

**Environmental Justice:** Low-income and minority populations who live near transit stations have better connections to employment areas, health care, social services, educational opportunities, and recreational and cultural facilities. Other transit-dependent populations such as the elderly, youth, and disabled persons will also benefit. An indirect benefit for these populations may result from Transit Oriented Development (TOD) which could provide affordable and workforce housing at or near proposed transit stations.

**Environmental Benefits:** Increased transit use cuts down on greenhouse gases which may contribute to global warming.

**Reduced Health Risks:** Emissions from road vehicles are the largest contributors to smog, which can cause serious illness or fatalities to those with diseases like asthma.

**Increased Real Estate Values:** Rail transit has been shown to have a positive effect on commercial and residential property values.

