



South Florida East Coast Corridor Study Letter to the Editor

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Subject: Take the Purple Line

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Take the Purple Line

There's a new station coming to Miami – a pop-up transit station! A group of students from Florida Atlantic University, in partnership with the Miami Foundation and a coalition of community groups, will launch a temporary train station adjacent to the FEC train tracks on March 8 and 9. For two days, the parking lots under the I-195 expressway at NW 2 Ave and 36 Street will be converted into a transit station, built out of temporary and mostly recycled materials, and will house a farmer's market, pop-up galleries, street performers and more.

The goal of the Purple Line is to raise awareness of the fact that the city desperately needs better transit service, and that the FEC line provides one of the best chances of building that service. The installation will serve to educate policy makers, local residents, and commuters about the benefits and convenience rail service would bring to this area. It's a call to elected officials to see the need for transit expansion and champion plans like the Tri-Rail Fast Start Plan that can benefit city residents in the near term.

There have been numerous studies and proposals for passenger service over the past decade, starting with the South Florida East Coast Corridor (SFECC) project. This FDOT sponsored project envisions a mix of local and regional commuter train service along the full 85-mile length of the corridor, connecting 28 coastal communities. The plan is ambitious, costly and complex.

The Fast Start Plan is a Tri-Rail sponsored proposal that seeks an accelerated launch of commuter service in a handful of stations along the line using their existing stock of rail cars and operational structure. This proposal would be a smart first step for the longer term SFECC study. Simultaneously, Florida East Coast Industries is pursuing high speed rail, branded All Aboard Florida, with limited stops in Miami, Fort Lauderdale and points north. All are worthwhile projects that serve different purposes.

The potential population served along the corridor numbers in the hundreds of thousands. In Miami alone, stops at 79 Street, 54 Street, and 36 Street would connect popular and growing areas such as Downtown Miami, Wynwood, Midtown, the Design District and the Upper Eastside. Unlike other locations around the city, the densities along the corridor can support high-quality transit service.

The Purple Line represents the aspirations of Miami's citizens to have a connected and convenient transit network.

So, are you ready for the Purple Line, Miami?

Marta Vicedo, co-founder, UrbanMatters CoLab, Coral Springs

Tony Garcia, principal, Street Plans Collaborative, Miami