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Commuter Rail, High-Speed Rail Missing Connections

Thursday, February 18, 2010 6:01:39 AM

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Reported by Scott Harris

ORLANDO -- In December, the State Legislature authorized SunRail, Central Florida's commuter rail system. The eventual route runs from DeLand, through Orlando, to Kissimmee and Poinciana.

Then just three weeks ago, President Barack Obama came to Tampa to announce Florida was getting over \$1 billion in stimulus money for its High-Speed Rail project. The bullet train route goes from Orlando International Airport to Tampa.

But there's a problem with the two new trains -- they don't connect. The routes do cross, but there's no train station planned where they cross.

Orange County Mayor Rich Crotty has sent a letter to the State Department of Transportation asking DOT to come up with a plan for connectivity.

There are several options.

There is a spur off the SunRail track that runs out near Orlando International Airport. That could be extended to the Bullet Terminal at OIA.

There has long been talk of light rail from the airport, to the Sand Lake Road station of SunRail, then on to I-Drive, and the High-Speed Rail station near the convention center.

Orange County has put together a map showing current and potential rail lines and possible connections.

Mayor Crotty said the professionals need to come up with the answer. The professionals in Florida are with the state DOT. That's why he said he sent the letter.

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- [Mayor Crotty's letter to DOT secretary \(2/17/10\)](#)
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