



News Clip

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Intermodal Center finances back on track

By JOHN MARTINEZ, District Six secretary, FDOT, Miami

Re the July 19 story *Report: Bills for transit center inflated*: I want to expand on recent Herald coverage of the Miami Intermodal Center (MIC).

Once completed it will link all modes of transportation at a site just east of the Miami International Airport. Its location will allow commuters and visitors to move efficiently around our community using various modes of transportation located there -- Tri-Rail, Amtrak, Metrorail and Metrobus.

As one of the most ambitious transportation projects ever in South Florida, many contracts and activities are occurring simultaneously, including ongoing demolition of existing structures in preparation for the rental-car facility and area roadways. In 2001, the Florida Department of Transportation hired R.L. Saum Construction to undertake demolition at the MIC site. At the time, FDOT owned only a few of the parcels needed. The initial work order for \$667,195 was based on those few parcels.

As additional parcels were acquired, the demolition contract was supplemented to perform the work. In August 2004, I questioned a request for supplemental funds for muck removal that seemed excessive and immediately called the inspector general's office to take a closer look. What was discovered was a combination of poor project-management oversight and substantial misuse of pay items.

In our enthusiasm to move the project forward, our project staff made poor decisions on the use of pay items that led to the overpayment to R.L. Saum.

FDOT has learned from this experience. I have taken measures to make sure that similar mistakes do not happen again. A District Oversight Committee (DOC) has been created to monitor and give final approval on all amendments and supplemental agreements to district contracts, including the MIC.

The committee is made up of the district directors of transportation support -- who will provide day-to-day project oversight -- transportation development and transportation operations and the district general counsel. Meetings are held every two weeks and are open to the public.