

» The Miami Intermodal Center is being built to ease congestion inside the airport and around it.

Rental Ease

FLORIDA DOT IS COMPLETING AN AMBITIOUS PROJECT AT MIAMI INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. BY RUSS GAGER

You've had a long exhausting flight, but you've finally arrived at the airport. You run the gauntlet of getting your baggage, and now you're standing on the curb waiting for the rental company's shuttle bus. You see a shuttle bus in the distance, and your hopes rise, only to be dashed when you see it is for another rental company.

You wait a while, and you see another shuttle bus in the distance, but it isn't yours, either. This process is repeated approximately 15 times until the 16th shuttle you see, which you pay no attention to, arrives – and it is yours.

Rerun thousands of times at airports around the world, this scenario has been rewritten at the Miami International Airport now that the Miami Rental Car Center has been finished. The state-of-the-art facility is part of the \$1.7

Turner Construction Co. - Miami Rental Car Center

www.turnerconstruction.com

- Construction cost: \$387 million
- Location: Miami
- Scope: 3.4 million square feet of new construction

"We should be able to reduce the congestion of the airport by at least 30 percent."

-Carlos Duarte, senior project manager

billion Miami Intermodal Center (MIC) program being built by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to provide connectivity where none existed and decongest the roads in and around the busy airport.

Now you can stand on the curb with your baggage and take the first shuttle bus that arrives regardless of its origin. A consolidated busing operator hired by the rental car industry bought approximately half of the existing fleet from all the rental car companies, painted them white and now use them to pick up any traveler going to rent cars from any of the 16 companies located at the facility.

Imagine that you don't even have to wait on the curb anymore, but rather can proceed to a light rail train station where an automated people mover, known as the MIA Mover, takes you directly to the Rental Car Center, and later, Miami Central Station. That will be the norm in 2011 when the people mover is completed.

Travelers will be able to board buses, taxis, privately owned automobiles and bicycles at the Miami Central Station. Being built just east



The Miami Rental Car Center is part of \$1.7 billion of work at Miami International Airport.

of the Rental Car Center, the Central Station will provide access to Tri-Rail, Metrorail, Amtrak, Greyhound and Miami-Dade Transit and courtesy buses that will take travelers to destinations in Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties. Provisions also are being made for a future high-speed/intercity rail.

Leasing Rental Space

Turner Construction completed the Rental Car Center in July 2010, which means customers can obtain their rental car and head out efficiently without having to worry about finding the company's off-site car auto lot upon their return.

"Every single passenger who needs to rent a car comes into the building," explains Carlos Duarte, senior project manager. "What we were able to do was consolidate all these guys - including the main players plus another seven or eight local players, small guys - all in one building.

"The idea is - when the MIA Mover is completed by next year - we should be able to reduce the congestion of the airport by at least 30 percent," Duarte calculates. "So far, we see a big reduction in the congestion. Before, we

used to have 10 shuttle buses at the same time. Now everything is organized coming into the airport."

Government estimates are that at completion, approximately 75,000 passengers will use the Rental Car Center and Central Station on a daily basis, of whom 60 percent, or 45,000, would use the people mover system.

The four-story Rental Car Center is located across Le Jeune Road from the airport terminal. The post-tension, precast and cast-in-place concrete structure uses an estimated 1,200 pieces of precast concrete in its construction, which cost approximately \$387 million.

For now, private vehicles and shuttle buses drop off travelers at the open top floor of the Rental Car Center, which is accessed by high ramped roadways, until the MIA Mover begins service between the airport and the Rental Car Center in September 2011. This massive open expanse is lined with palm trees and provides limited parking.

Travelers proceed into a 90,000-square-foot lobby on the top floor capped with a space frame structure made of tubular steel trusses. The space frame extends above the lobby's roof so daylight flows into the lobby from win-

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Turner Construction estimates that it worked with approximately 250 subcontractors during the first five phases of the Miami Intermodal Center construction program. <<



dows around its edge. The space frame structure is shaped like a football when viewed from above and provides sweeping curves inside the lobby ceiling.

The lobby features elaborate finishes, such as terrazzo flooring and stainless steel and phenolic panels, along with a multitude of bilingual signage. A thermoplastic membrane with large amounts of insulation covers the space frame's roof. Those departing take shuttle buses to the airport, while those arriving proceed to their respective rental car desks and then to the three floors below to obtain their autos.

Outside the Rental Car Center, Turner Construction managed road and highway improvements and installation of guard booths, traffic control devices and traffic signs.

Concrete Accomplishment

The challenge of the project, besides its size of 3.4 million square feet, is the speed with which it was built, Duarte says. "We had to

move fast with the precast and all the concrete just to pour concrete 24/7," he reports. "The second main challenge was because of the facility being the only one so far in the United States with vertical gasoline dispensers, we had to implement a different kind of system. You can find a fuel dispenser on the second or third floor."

All 16 rental car company's fleets are located on the first three floors, so two underground gasoline tanks had to be located at each end of the building. The building has 6,500 parking spaces plus car washing and servicing equipment to change oil and provide other maintenance services the rental cars need. A total of 42 car wash bays and 120 dispensers offering 180,000 gallons of regular-only gasoline are in the building.

Tunnels approximately 11 feet deep lead from the first floor of the customer service lobby to the east side of the building. Tunnels, fuel tanks and trenches are the underground features of the Rental Car Center.

Development Mode

Potential public and private development opportunities around the Miami Central Station for up to 1.4 million square feet of mixed-use development are offices, hotel and meeting spaces, parking, ancillary retail and restaurants. FDOT may lease or sell joint development parcels to a private developer or a public agency.

Immediately east of the Miami Central Station is a privately-owned area that could provide an additional 4.5 million square feet of mixed-use development for offices, hotels, retail and entertainment.

Phased Construction

The Rental Car Center was constructed by FDOT, which upon its completion turned it over to the Miami-Dade Aviation Department (MDAD). MDAD leased space to the auto rental companies, who hired construction companies

to do the build-out of their spaces. Turner Construction completed the build-outs for eight rental car companies.

The first phase of the Rental Car Center construction was started in 2003 and consisted of building its foundation. That was completed in 2004. The second phase was construction of water mains, drainage and sewer systems and roadwork around the building. That was completed in May 2007.

The third phase was building the foundation of the guideway for the people mover train that connects the Rental Car Center with the airport. The fourth phase was constructing the four-story building and bridges and roads to access it. These phases have been completed. The fifth phase is building the people mover station, which is scheduled for completion in September 2011.

The sixth phase of Turner's construction is of the Miami Central Station for rail and bus service. That \$158 million project is also being funded by FDOT. Scheduled to begin construction by late 2010/early 2011, it is scheduled for completion in 2013.

Turner is functioning as construction manager on the overall MIC Program. Duarte esti-

mates the first five phases of the project employed approximately 250 subcontractors. Funding for the MIC Program is from two loans under the Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act, which was included in the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century.

Additional major funding comes from various state and local sources, private sector fees – such as rental car company lease income – and other charges, such as those to auto rental customers. Funds from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act also are being applied to the Miami Central Station.

International in Scope

The entire MIC Program is being built out of Turner Construction Co.'s south Florida office, which covers the Florida Keys to Palm Beach. The company has 45 offices across the United States and does projects worldwide through its international division. Turner Construction is handling projects in Latin America, China, Singapore, Vietnam, India, Moscow, the Middle East, Abu Dhabi and Dubai, where the company helped construct the tallest building in the world, the Burj Khalifa.

Founder's Prize

Founded in 1902 by Henry C. Turner, Turner Construction Co. relies on integrity, commitment and teamwork as its core values. It established an endowment for the Henry C. Turner Prize at the National Building Museum to recognize an invention, innovation and/or exceptional leadership in construction technology. Awarded annually, it rewards construction techniques, innovations and practices, construction and project management, and engineering design within the United States or by Americans outside the United States.

Areas of the United States that Duarte mentions as having strong projects are California; Texas; Ohio; Washington, D.C.; Virginia; and the Carolinas. Turner Construction builds a variety of projects including hotels and hospitality, hospitals and health care facilities, high schools and universities and even the new New York Yankees stadium. Current projects are tending more toward government than commercial customers, Duarte says. ♦

Congratulations Turner Construction!

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