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Florida Department of Transportation Lauded by American Planning Association

Miami Rental Car Center Earns APA Award of Excellence

Miami — The recently opened Miami Rental Car Center (RCC), built by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), has received the prestigious American Planning Association's (APA) Award of Excellence. The award, sponsored by the APA's Gold Coast Section, recognizes excellence in planning that "supports quality development practices which combine good design, sensitivity to the environment, and which facilitate an improved quality of life."

Among the RCC's many notable features are its distinctive architecture, enhanced safety and security and the first multilevel fueling system in the United States. This innovative system required careful consideration of technical and life safety challenges and permits a more economical car turnaround cycle for rental car companies.

"The Rental Car Center was a completely new challenge for the department because we are thought of as road builders," said FDOT District Six Secretary Gus Pego. "We designed it by implementing innovative and state-of-the-art planning methods and practices, and built it through exceptional interagency cooperation."

The award was accepted by FDOT MIC Program Manager Gary Donn at the APA Gold Coast Section annual awards luncheon on December 8th at the Miami Beach Golf Club.

Encouraging excellence in planning has been APA's purpose since its inception in 1978. The APA's Gold Coast Section supports quality development practices which combine good design, sensitivity to the environment and facilitate an improved quality of life. The Gold Coast Section's award program recognizes those planners, developers, architects, landscape architects, project owners or other design professionals who have exemplified outstanding planning studies or urban design and development projects in Miami-Dade and Monroe counties.

"The Gold Coast Section of the American Planning Association (Florida Chapter) is pleased to honor the Florida Department of Transportation District Six with an Award of Excellence for the Miami Rental Car Center," said Lynda Kompelien Westin, Gold Coast Section Treasurer and Award Program Coordinator. "The RCC shows sustainability in practice, consolidating acres of separate rental car facilities into one state-of-the-art structure, at the same time saving energy. Now visitors to South Florida, who are key to the South Florida economy, will have a much more positive first experience at the RCC. Hats off to FDOT District Six for making this mega project come to life."

The RCC is the second largest facility of its kind in the United States, with a total capacity for 6,500 vehicles. The 3.4 million square foot rental car shopping mall provides rental car choices in one convenient location for travelers arriving to South Florida. Each of its four levels is 20 acres in size; the first three floors are dedicated to storage and maintenance operations and the fourth level is a spacious customer service lobby. Sixteen companies including all that used to operate inside the airport and several that were located nearby are now situated in the center.

The \$387 million RCC is the first major structure of the \$1.7 billion MIC Program. Scheduled to open in fall 2011 is the MIA Mover, a 1.25-mile automated people mover system connecting the airport to the RCC and future Miami Central Station. Miami-Dade County's first ground transportation hub, the Miami Central Station will be completed in 2013. An eight-acre Joint Development component is also being planned. For details on the MIC Program and its components, visit www.micdot.com.

MIC Program Manager Gary Donn Receives APA Award of Excellence for FDOT

Left to right: Lynda Kompelien Westin, ACIP, APA Gold Coast Section Treasurer & Award Program Coordinator; Gary L. Donn, P.E., Florida Department of Transportation District Six Director of Transportation Support & MIC Program Manager; Oliver Kerr, APA Gold Coast Section Executive Board Member