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Car rental facility to open at Miami International Airport

By Bill Frogameni

A 3.4 million-square-foot rental car facility is set to open Tuesday at Miami International Airport.

The rental car facility is the latest phase in a sweeping, multibillion-dollar capital improvement program transforming the older airport to better match Miami's status as an international crossroads.

"This is another signal that we're arriving as a big time global destination," said Bill Talbert, president and CEO of the Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau. "It's another wonderful day in the history of Miami."

The massive, \$343 million rental car facility houses 16 rental car companies that were previously scattered around the airport. The facility is a key phase in the \$1.7 billion Miami Intermodal Center, a transit hub that will offer airport travelers easy access to bus, rail and auto.

When it is fully operational in 2013, the MIC will eliminate about 30 percent of auto congestion at MIA, said Gus Pego, secretary for the District 6 of the Florida Department of Transportation, the agency overseeing most construction at the MIC.

"That, in itself, is a big improvement," he said.

The MIC will also include a new east-west Metrorail connection; the MIA Mover, a 1.25-mile elevated people mover system; a bus depot for Greyhound, courtesy shuttles and Miami-Dade County buses; and new Tri-Rail and Amtrak facilities.