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FDOT wins APA award for Miami rental car centre

The recently opened Miami Rental Car Centre (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, recognises 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 fuelling 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 Centre 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 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 travellers 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 centre.

The US\$387 million RCC is the first major structure of the \$1.7 billion MIC programme. Scheduled to open towards the end of 2011 is the MIA Mover, a two kilometre 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.

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