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Miami, Florida 33142www.micdot.com
1 888 838 5355**Miami Intermodal Center****News Clip**From: *Miami Today*, Thursday, July 5, 2012Subject: **Metrorail to airport about to open, may carry 1 million yearly**Provided by: Jenine Spoliansky, Kommunikatz, Inc.
jspoliansky@kommunikatz.com**Metrorail to airport about to open, may carry 1 million yearly**

By LOU ORTIZ

More than three years after breaking ground, the Miami-Dade Metrorail link to Miami International Airport is to start carrying passengers July 28, officials said.

The new 2.4-mile track to the airport is expected to shuttle 800,000 to 1.2 million passengers a year to and from the airport along the county Metrorail system.

"I'm thrilled that the Miami International Airport Metrorail Station will be open for business soon, and providing our residents and visitors with a great new amenity," Mayor Carlos Gimenez said in a statement. "All of the world's leading cities – London, Tokyo, Paris, Sydney – have rail links that connect their international airports to the urban core, and now we're joining that club."

In the US, cities with rail links to their airports are rather exclusive, with Miami joining Chicago, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, San Francisco, Portland, Washington DC, and Seattle-Tacoma in providing the rail service to passengers.

"This is not only an important transportation project that will provide travel choices for people, but it is also a transformational economic development project in the sense that every hotel and business in downtown Miami, Kendall and ev-



Photo by Maxine Usdan

A Metrorail train on a test run prepares for the opening of the Miami International Airport link July 28.

erywhere else along the Metrorail system will now be at the front door of Miami International Airport – the largest economic engine in the region," said County Transit Director Ysela Llort.

The county broke ground on the project in May 2009 with cost totaling \$506 million. The Florida Department of Transportation provided \$101.3 mil-

lion of it, with \$404.7 million from the county's Citizens Independent Transportation Plan.

The plan, which voters approved Nov. 5, 2002, collects a half-percent surtax for transportation projects.

Transit Department spokesperson Karla Damian said "the project is on time and on budget."

Called the Orange Line, the airport link, 23rd station on the Metrorail system, will operate from 5 a.m. to midnight seven days a week. The county operated test runs on the airport link June 28-29.

Commuters can ride the Orange Line uninterrupted to the airport from Dadeland South heading north to the airport.

However, commuters riding the Green Line south from the Palmetto, Hialeah, Northside, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Brownsville stations must transfer to the Orange Line at the Earlington Heights station.

Meanwhile, refurbishing of the 136-car Metrorail fleet, at a cost of \$190 million, is underway and should be completed in 2019, according to report to the county commission by the People's Transportation Trust. The current fleet has been in service more than 20 years.

The refurbished rail cars are to be fitted with state-of-the-art electronic equipment and high-tech materials, including a new diagnostic system that will allow train operators and maintenance personnel to locate and correct mechanical problems, according to county documents. For security, each rail car is to be fitted with a closed-circuit television system.

The refurbished rail cars will also switch from direct current to alternating current, resulting in the use of less energy and requiring less maintenance, documents show. At least 56 of the rail cars will have new end noses, resembling European high-speed trains, and will be more aerodynamic.

In addition to retrofitting the rail cars, the transportation trust is spending more than \$15.9 million to upgrade the Metrorail control center.