



News Clip

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TRANSPORTATION

MIAMI TODAY 15



Key elements of growth include rental car facility and central station. \$88 million multimodal transportation complex is on track to open in November 2013 east of the airport.

Sleek Miami Central Station to open in just over a year

By Scott Blake

If New York could build Grand Central Station a century ago with all of its stately, intricate architecture and engineering challenges, then certainly Miami can build a minimalist-style, sleek 21st Century version, aptly named Miami Central Station.

And that's exactly what's happening, as construction of the \$88 million multimodal transportation complex east of Miami International Airport is breezing along as planned, according to Carl Filer, the Florida Department of Transportation's Miami Intermodal Center program manager.

"We should be ready for all operations," Mr. Filer said.

He was referring to the station's official opening date of November 2013. When complete, there will be nothing quite like it in Florida.

"We think it's certainly going to be a big, beautiful facility," he added.

Think a modernistic, wide-open version of Grand Central Station, bringing together various rail services, buses and other vehicles.

Mr. Filer said all of the station's operators — from Amtrak and Greyhound to Metrorail and Tri-Rail, remain committed to the project and are expected to provide service through the station as planned, although some formalities need to be addressed.

"We still need to tender agreements," he added, "but they've been partners from day one."

New York City's Grand Central Station is said to draw more than 21 million visitors a year, many tourists who just come to see the historic building. Miami Central Station isn't expected to be quite that busy, but still should draw travelers by the millions.

The station is one of three components of what's called the Miami Intermodal Center. That includes the four-level, 3.4 million-square-foot Rental Car Center, which opened in 2010 and is said to be the second-largest facility of its kind in the U.S.

The third component is the MIA Mover, a light-rail people mover system that opened in September that links Miami International to the Rental Car Center and Miami Central Station.

According to projections released by Mr. Filer's office, the Miami Intermodal Center's initial ridership is expected to total between about 3.36 million and 3.76 million passenger trips a year.

Those projections don't include Metrobus, Miami-Dade's bus system, and various shuttle buses and taxis, which also will use the station.

The projections break down as follows: MIA Mover (2.2 million); Metrorail, Miami-Dade's heavy-rail transportation system (800,000 to 1.2 million); Tri-Rail, a regional commuter rail linking points across South Florida (262,902); Greyhound, the inter-city bus company (53,500); and Amtrak, the interstate rail system (42,992).

What makes project officials most enthusiastic about Miami Central Station is that it will be a point of connectivity for local, regional and interstate modes of travel.

That includes Metrorail's new Orange Line, set to go into service July 28. The new line includes a 2.4-mile extension linking the Allapattah and Earlington Heights stations to the Miami Intermodal Center.

Meanwhile, Metrorail will double its service frequency between the Dadeland South station and the Earlington Heights station.

In addition, officials said, seven Metrobus routes now serving Miami International's terminal will be moved July 22 and rerouted to the new Metrorail station at the Miami Intermodal Center, where the airport can be accessed via a short trip on the MIA Mover.

For those coming and going from Miami International Airport or those without cars or who want another travel option, project officials said, Miami Central Station will make

moving around Miami, beyond more seamless.

county, South Florida and be-

project," Mr. Filer said. "It's

"This is a very interesting

been a learning experience."

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Department of Off-Street Parking (DOSP)

595 EXPRESS BUS SERVICE EASES COMMUTE TO DOWNTOWN MIAMI



595 EXPRESS BUS

Imagine texting the whole way to work. Or reading a great novel. Or "how about sleeping? Sound dangerous?" Not if you ride the new 595 Express Bus from the BankAtlantic Center park-and-ride in Sunrise to downtown Miami/Rickell Avenue and downtown Fort Lauderdale.

Jacqueline Binns is thrilled with her new commute. "The 595 Express Bus is beyond what I expected," said Binns, who lives in Weston and works in downtown Fort Lauderdale. "Driving more than 50 miles a day adds up. With the 595 Express Bus I not only save money on gas, parking, and car expenses, but I can also get a jumpstart on my work day using the free Wi-Fi."

Funded by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) with services provided by Broward County Transit (BCT), the 595 Express Bus runs every 30 minutes on weekday mornings and afternoons. The fleet is comprised of new 42-foot hybrid buses equipped with free Wi-Fi and 12-volt power outlets for charging elec-

tronic communication equipment.

"Think of the 595 Express Bus as the ultimate hands-free device," said Jeremy Mullings, FDOT Project Manager. "Instead of fighting traffic, commuters can now spend their time how they'd like: surfing the net, catching up on emails or simply relaxing. And, with the cost of commuting as high as it is, riding the 595 Express Bus has never made more sense for residents commuting from Western Broward."

595 Express Bus fares are \$2.35 for a one-way adult fare to downtown Miami and downtown Fort Lauderdale. BCT is also offering a Premium 31-Day Bus Pass for \$85 that includes unlimited rides on both express and regular bus service and a Premium 10-Ride Bus Pass at a cost of \$23.50.

For details on the service, including route maps and schedules, visit www.595ExpressBus.com or call BCT Customer Service at 954-357-8400 (TTY: 954-357-8302).