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News

I-Team: Transportation's Future

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Reporting Stephen Stock

At Miami International Airport they call this the "MIC," M-I-C... Miami Intermodal Center.

And when it is completed, experts say it will one of the most premier facilities in the country.

Trains, planes and automobiles. It doesn't matter what form of transportation you use, residents and travelers alike, will soon be able to get it here, says Harpal Kapoor, Director of Transit for Miami-Dade County, "this will serve as a one stop location. And soon you'll be able to have one ticket and go anywhere on any type of public transportation in South Florida from Miami to West Palm Beach... one ticket."

Thirty years in the dreaming, planning, politicizing and building... with a \$1.7 billion dollars price tag... when the Miami Intermodal Center is finally finished, it will be a hub where you can find and ride everything... from private cars to rental cars... people movers to bicycles... airplanes to buses... metro-rail to tri-rail... taxis to water taxis

Gus Pego is Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation, District #6. "When we're done you'll be able to go from West Palm Beach all the way to Key West on public transportation. It will be all connected here."

"Right here?" asks Stock.

"It's going to be the Grand Central Station of Miami.

The powerful Chairman of the US House Transportation Committee Representative John Mica of Central Florida, took us on a behind the scenes look at the project.

Mica brought together teams of officials from Orlando, Tampa, Jacksonville, even Tulsa, Oklahoma to tour this nearly completed center to see how they can build similar hubs in their communities.

“It used to be no one rode public transportation because it wasn’t connected. You couldn’t get anywhere or where you wanted to go,” Mica told Stock. “That’s all changed with this.”

Even in a time of budget cuts in transportation... cutbacks in major projects like this... Mica, a Democrat, says he still believes that this type of public transportation combination center is the future in the US.

“This serves as a model for the rest of the country. they did it right here in Miami.”

When it is completed, this center will serve as the ending point for a people mover bringing travelers from the airport... where they can then connect to tri-rail, buses, cars, any form of transportation to go anywhere in South Florida.

This part is scheduled to be completed by 2012... the entire Intermodal Center is slated to be completed by 2013.

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