100 great ideas

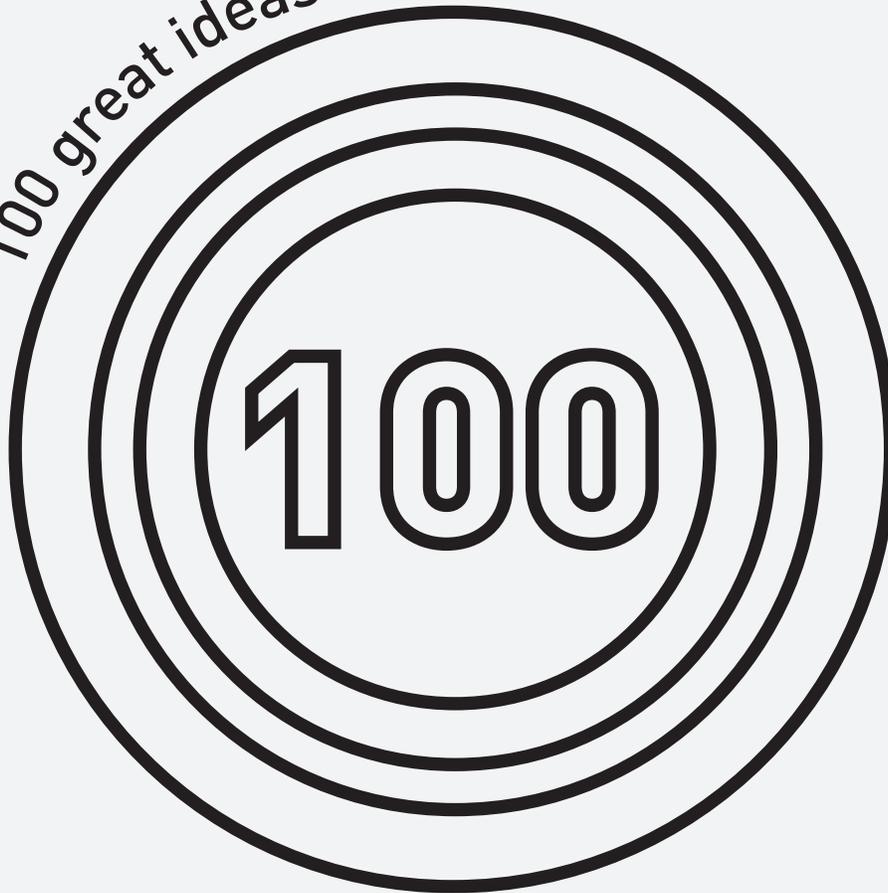# 100

The Future of Miami International Airport

A Campaign by:
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WE ARE CONVINCED

People want to play a role in shaping their own communities.

There is a notable distance between decision-makers and most community members.

We can lower the barrier to entry for community engagement to enable more people to contribute.

Social media is one solution to the above constraints and can be effectively used to generate solutions for cities.

WE EXPERIMENTED

100 Great Ideas is an experiment in open dialogue and engagement around a vital community issue. We created a no-strings-attached, low-barrier space for people to discuss, share ideas, build on each other's suggestions, and offer user-experience feedback around one topic for five days. Find our group on Facebook under 100 Great Ideas.

Our first open discussion was focused on how to better leverage the libraries in Miami-Dade County.

This time, we focused on one of the most important hubs in our city: Miami International Airport (MIA). Miami is working furiously to become a national magnet for talent, entrepreneurialism, and global business. Our airport not only frames people's experience in Miami, it logistically enables our city to work and play. We wanted to engage locals in an exploration of the importance of our airport, and create a space where people could collaborate to identify the most important ways to strengthen it.

HERE'S WHAT HAPPENED

1 online community challenge

5 day campaign

890 group members

150+ ideas generated

10 major themes

**Ideas. Advice. Articles. Opinions. Images.
All contributions were welcome.**

Here's what emerged:

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THEMES

Many of the most frequently mentioned and most "liked" ideas were interconnected.

Each theme was woven together using quotes and content generated from the campaign itself. The following pages explore different concepts in the broader and more popular categories. Some quotes were combined and/or edited for clarity and brevity.
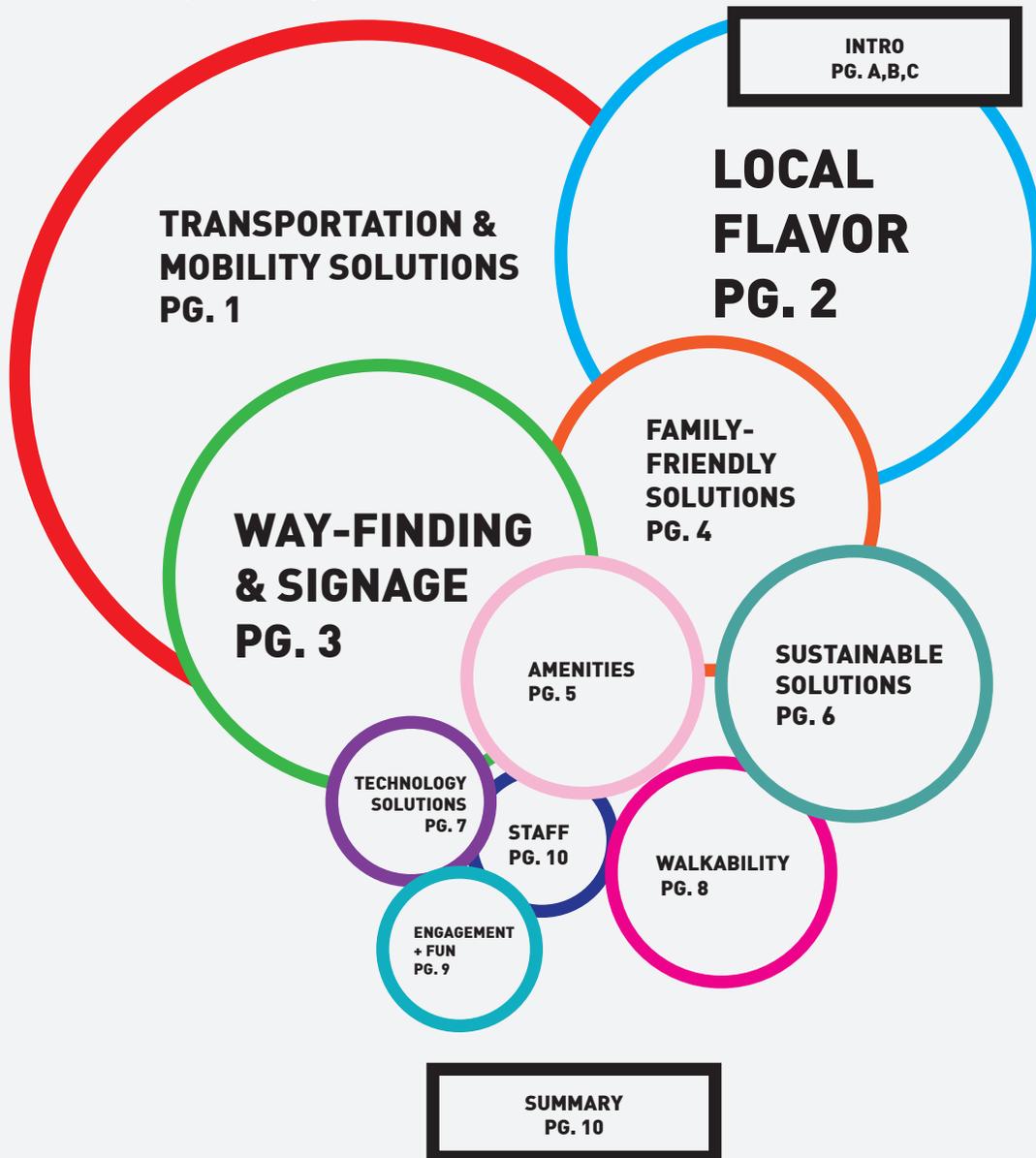
TRANSPORTATION & MOBILITY SOLUTIONS

Contributors expressed a need for increased transportation options to/from the airport, and had ideas for increased mobility within the airport itself.

Metrorail: It is a no-brainer to have Metrorail go to the place(s) where the hotels are. (Adam Old)

Alternative Transit Options: Embrace innovation with Uber and Lyft, creating signage and a designated area for them. The drive from the airport is often a visitor's first impression of Miami; why not showcase our innovative spirit, and make it easier to get around? (Various contributors).

Trail Connectivity & Bike Parking: One solution to the chronic MIA gridlock: create new connections to the surrounding neighborhoods (i.e. link the Ludlam Trail and the Miami River Greenway). Is there secure bicycle parking at MIA? Bike valet? (Sam Van Leer)

Water Taxis: Ever notice the canal that goes by the airport, into the Miami River? How about public water buses to take you downtown, to Miami Beach, the cruise lines, and even across the Blue Lagoon on the south side of the airport. There are businesses and hotels there too. (James Echols)

Expand the Blue Cab (airport area) coverage zone. Since it's just a $15 trip from MIA to my house--as opposed to a $30+ fare to the beach--cabbies will do just about anything to avoid taking me. Every time I leave the airport, I think about what must be thousands of visitors every year who get a terrible first impression of Miami due to this very issue. Expanding the blue cab coverage zone would fix this problem instantly. (Jean Louis Rochet)

Wider Lanes: Wider lanes at arrival and departure, with medians or express lane poles for within terminal driving vs. between terminal driving. (Erica Schmeltzer)

LOCAL FLAVOR

Some of the most popular ideas during the campaign focused on finding clever and meaningful ways to showcase the heart of the city within the airport itself. A win-win for the local economy, visitors and the airport.

Curated Cultural Stations/Pop up Kiosks: Set up "cultural stations" whereby neighborhood info is shared, locally sourced products sold and tours of these areas can be arranged. Each kiosk is hosted by a community organization/ambassador; for instance, MCAD or MiamiDDA can host for Downtown Miami, Little Haiti Cultural Center for Little Haiti, Black Archives/Lyric Theater for Overtown, Viernes Culturales for Little Havana, etc. (Mikhaile Solomon)

Virtual Neighborhood Tours: Interactive screens to promote Miami's cultural diversity, allowing you to virtually tour different neighborhoods and learn about various cultures or artistic disciplines while listening to related music, watching performances, viewing work by local artists, etc. (Aileen Leigh)

Currency Donation: Have collection sites for foreign coins and currencies from incoming flights to collect donations for local causes (Ellen Book and others).

It's all About Partnerships: Miami Children's Museum could run a children's area; Fairchild could host a mini-garden; New World Symphony host a quiet room with chairs, running NWS videos or playing music. Frost Science Museum could offer an offshoot with hands-on kid activities promoting the new museum. (Florencia Jimenez-Marcos)

Local Hosts: What if there was a service where visitors could arrange to have a local host. The host could greet them at the airport and show them the REAL Miami not just South Beach. This would enable people to go beyond the surface of our city. (Elliott Jones)

WAY-FINDING & SIGNAGE

Many people expressed frustration finding their way around the airport. Signage should be thoughtful, clear, and smoothly guide travelers from point A to point B.

Cellphone Lot: Unbeknownst to a lot of people, MIA does have a cell phone lot, which could be better demarcated so people don't park along the highway exit ramps while waiting for their loved ones. (Mariana Rego)

Terminals: Fix the directional signage inside the airport. It is abominable. It is geared only to the Mover and if you follow the signs, you often end up going in the wrong direction. A small but significant fix. (Carol Coletta)

Parking Garage Signs: It is extremely difficult to know where to park. Lots should have signage that frequently explain where to park for various terminals and airlines, how many spaces are free, and how to easily get where you're headed once you're parked. (Various)

Arriving: I'm a local and have flown out of MIA countless times and still get confused. We need clearer signs on arrival about what lanes to use (outer or inner) for each airline/concourse, and clear signage about when to cut back in. You see so many people stopping, slowing down, suddenly cutting across multiple lanes because it's not clear when to get over. This happens again with foot-traffic inside the airport, as people are constantly walking back and forth down the terminals trying to figure out where to check-in. (Rob BK)

Valet: Several contributors expressed a desire for the airport to offer valet parking. The airport does offer this amenity, but the signage is so last-minute, that only someone who knows which ramp to take, (arrivals) and which lane to stick to (far left) would be able to find it. (Various)

FAMILY-FRIENDLY SOLUTIONS

Contributors expressed a longing for more family-friendly offerings and accommodations at MIA.

Security lines and pumping pods: Separate security line for people with kids under 10. Admit it--people flying without kids don't want to be stuck behind a family with children, and families hate getting glares from other passengers because it takes them so long to put every bag on the conveyor belt. It would be a win-win to have separate lines. And...I also just LOVE nursing/pumping pods I've seen at other airports! (Angelika Zilberman)

Indoor playgrounds: It would be wonderful to have spaces for children at each terminal. A space for a toddler to burn off their energy and a space for slightly older children to run, swing, and play. If there were also some child care available at these locations that would be great. Weary parents could run to the bathroom, grab something to eat, take a load off, etc... while their children were wearing themselves out (and potentially gearing up to sleep on the plane!).
(Samantha Hoare)

Options for parents and kids: Perhaps a children's playground right next to an outdoor gym for the parents so that they could play side by side. Or a leave a book/toy, take a book/toy community sharing. (Florencia Jimenez-Marcos)

Child/Pet Care: What if there were drop-off pet/child care options? (Various)

Changing tables in Men's bathrooms: Daddies change babies too, yet they don't always have changing tables in the men's room. (Gabriele Guzman)

Rooftop play areas: A rooftop green space to get fresh air or let kids play. Can you imagine a totally secure space where on a long layover, you can go up to the roof top terrace to eat a meal or picnic or just hang out outside in the fresh air before being cooped up like sardines on a plane?!! (Samra Vogel)

SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS

Quite a few posters identified concrete ways that airports could increase sustainability and eco-friendliness.

Water Bottle Refills: TSA has garbage cans in line since you cannot bring full water bottles through. What they don't tell you is that you can bring empty water bottles through, and refill them after the TSA Check Point. 1) Have a sign at the entry point of the line letting people know they can bring empty water bottles through and refill after TSA (ideally with a sink at the end of the security line for refills). 2) Have recycling cans in the TSA line instead of garbage for those who don't want to refill, since 95% of the materials will be water bottles. (Various)

Photovoltaic Transparent Glass Skylights: Let's put Florida sunshine to good use, and line up the new terminal with PV Glass Skylights. It would (1) Let natural light in (2) Provide a sense of openness (3) Capture solar energy to fuel airport needs including powering charging stations, departures/arrivals screens, kiosks, etc., (4) Cut energy costs, thus reducing energy consumption by the airport. The technology already exists. (Filiberto Lara)

Add More Green & Living Things: Imagine flying in or out of MIA and seeing roofs covered in green or solar. (Michael De Felipi) Miami is very green, and our airport should be too: plants, trees, greenery, water features, green living wall systems, living things. (Ana Colls + Others)

Gardens: Grow produce in the green areas surrounding the runways (like it is done at Tamiami airport), which will supply a farm-to-table restaurant and Farmers Market within the airport. (David McCombie)

Leadership: How about we swing for the fences and turn MIA into the Coolest, Cleanest, Greenest, most Sustainable airport IN THE WORLD and lead for a change? (Sean O'Hanlon)

AMENITIES

Many participants shared suggestions for features that would enhance the user-experience at the airport.

Seating: Airport seating areas are still designed from a time when most people checked their bags. Now we're bringing large carry-ons, laptop bags, trying to charge devices and eat a meal before going aboard. Let's rethink those spaces to make them more like comfortable lounges. Why not have a range of seating options: a series of high top tables with outlet chargers where people can work a bit, coupled with comfortable seating or couches where it's easy to relax, eat a meal and watch your bag. Modular seating would make it easier for the airport to adjust it across gates, depending on flight schedules. (Marika Lynch)

Quiet Spaces: It's time for our airport to make space, for space! Top airports have already seen the benefits; having dedicated space for people to sit quietly, decompress and stretch their mind and body, reduces stress for the traveler and all of those they encounter. Wouldn't be a bad idea to let staff across the airport utilize the space for the same reasons and benefits as well. (Francine Madera).

User-Study / Design Thinking: Are there any observational studies or actual polls of what specific difficulties travelers have at MIA Airport? (100 Great Ideas!) These go a long way at uncovering actionable insights about what to design for people (and make them happy). (Ezekiel Williams)

Optimize Skytrain: The Skytrain is a great idea, has great views and needs help including better signage, faster escalators up and down and better utilization of the elevated space (e.g., a lounge with bar/food service). (Jordan Weitz)

Redesign like a Train Station: Heathrow, Tampa, and LGA have spaces with more of a train-station feel where you can sit, order food, shop, and go to your gate just for boarding. (Max Tee)

WALKABILITY

Participants offered suggestions to make it easier for those getting around at the airport·

Pedestrian Access: Improve the pedestrian experience between the two garages and between the garages and terminals. Walkways often end in a dead end. (Javier Soto)

Safety: I don't always feel safe in the parking lots. Part of that is signage, and how confusing it is to find your way to the right area. Part of that is lighting and visibility of cameras/security features. (Rebecca Fishman Lipsey)

Moving Walkways: inside the 1,000,000 mile D terminal. (Mike Hoyos)

Security Checkpoints: At DFW, you can enter/exit the terminal within a few gates of wherever you are. As a result, security lines are shorter and you spend a lot less time just getting to your gate or leaving the airport. Could we do this at MIA? (Annie Lord)

Ease for Handicapped: The airport is difficult to navigate when handicapped. Many spaces are narrow, winding, multi-tiered, lengthy or congested (Teresa Frontado + others).

Inter-Airport Bikes with racks: Ever feel like it takes forever to walk to some of the American Airlines gates, but the Skytrain seems inefficient/lazy? How about a Citibike at the airport with a luggage rack on the back? (Dara Schoenwald)

Art: There is art throughout MIA, but much of it is confined to specific terminals that most passengers will never see. Other more trafficked hallways are boring, or filled with advertisements. What if we filled these halls with large-scale art installations highlighting South Florida's unique culture and ecosystem? think Artists in Residence in Everglades, Little Haiti Cultural Center (City of Miami), Cuban Museum | Museo Cubano, etc...(Victoria Fear)

TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

Many of the comments offered concrete suggestions for leveraging technology to support the needs of all types of travelers.

Tech for Parking: I'd love for the parking lots to have digital signs indicating how many spots are available on each floor. Too often I find myself running late for a flight and then driving back and forth around entirely full floors in the parking lot. (Vance Aloupis)

Tech for Baggage: I love airports, including MIA. The absolute worst part is baggage claim. It can ruin an otherwise lovely travel experience. It would help if folks could track their luggage from plane to carousel through a mobile application. The experience at baggage claim can also be improved greatly with helpful greeters, concessions, TV entertainment. Anything to distract travelers having to wait, at times over an hour, for their bags. (Brian Breslin)

Mobile Rentals: Bringing libraries and airports together! At Taiwan Taiyuan International Airport you can rent an iPad or other e-reader with literary works available in both Chinese and English across the genres. Now take it an extra step and just add a quiet reading room where I can curl up with a book and I'll be a happy traveler. www.taoyuan-airport.com (Ana Mantica)

Tech for Travelers: Free wifi and plentiful charging stations... and just because the Wi-Fi is free does not mean that the login page and process should be complicated and slow. (Multiple Contributors)

Tech for Visitors: There are kiosks where visitors can walk up to a smart touchscreen device, tap a button, and be instantly connected to someone via live HD video right there on the spot. The kiosk can connect to anyone, such as a welcoming committee who speaks multiple languages. (Miles Varghese)

ENGAGEMENT + FUN

Several contributors suggested creative and viable ways to make time in the airport more enjoyable, memorable, and positive.

Off-Site Exploration: I'd love to encourage long layovers for the wandering kind of folk. Places to store your bags if you want to leave the airport for a bit, heading out for concert events and/or other things people might want to plan a layover around. Build up a list of local happenings (concerts, theater, talks) and offer the information to travelers who may be interested in venturing out while they wait. (Kamalah Fletcher)

Meet-up Spots: Different meetup spots at different terminals; could be themed for singles, entrepreneurs, techies, music/movie sharing, book/magazine exchange. This could be fun and cheap. Only need signage, an app, and maybe a web page. (Maggie Fernandez)

Book Share: Have a place/box for book donations for travelers who want to lighten their loads because they finished reading the book or simply to shed some weight. The books could be donated to local libraries. We should also encourage airport bookstores to have a section with books by Miami authors and novels set in Miami. (this can tie back in with the cultural kiosks!) (Corrina Moebius)

Film Screenings: O Cinema could launch a small theater for long layovers with short films and documentaries. Local businesses showcase themselves to a target audience wanting to know the best to see and do in Miami. (Florencia Jimenez-Marcos)

Playfulness: Let's build a sense of community and human connectivity at the airport. Have Xbox, Nintendo etc. sponsor kiosks where people can play against each other. Young and old can get in on the action. I'd love a game of Wii bowling against fellow passengers as I wait for my flight! (Ana Colls)

Yoga: How about a free yoga and meditation space before the flight?! Om #NamasteBeforeBoarding (Camila Souza)

STAFF

All of the staff (airlines, independent vendors , TSA and overall airport staff) greatly influence and contribute to a positive and/or negative experience at the airport.

Rate your service: Like Uber drivers, we should be able to grade airport/airline staff based on efficiency, manners, and simple hospitality. London airport provides a user survey right after security. Pencil and paper or simple green light/red light. (Meg Daly)

Friendly Greeting: How about pleasant videos at security by local entertainers explaining the procedures at security instead of the TSA guys screaming them at you. (Cheryl Jacobs)

TSA Alignment: The past three times I've been to MIA I approached a security checkpoint designated for my airline and was instructed by TSA to move down to the next checkpoint. When I arrived, I was told to go one more checkpoint down, even though that sign also said it was for my airline. It was incredibly frustrating to keep being told I'm in the wrong place even though the signage indicated otherwise. (Victoria Fear)

Service Standards: The airport should implement top quality service standards that are expected of all airlines and vendors within MIA. This holds these businesses accountable to be on par with the image and reputation MIA cares to uphold as the first and last touch point for visitors, and how it sends off and welcomes its own locals. (Stephen Eichenbaum)

Luggage: I really can't begin to imagine why at MIA it takes an hour for luggage when at most other airports by the time you deplane and use the restroom, 5-10 min later your bag is there. Is it the distance from the plane to baggage claim or outdated luggage train cars? Understaffed or inefficient scanning of tags for final destination? (Erica Schmeltzer)

Terminal Information: This is probably more of an airline administration issue, but late flights should be modified/changed on screen as soon as possible. (Meg Daly)

SUMMARY

This was just the tip of the iceberg. It is evident from the quantity and quality of ideas submitted for this campaign that Miami residents care deeply about the airport. We believe this is not only because they are its most frequent users, but also because they understand the role it plays in representing us and linking our city to the outside world. From logistical and technology solutions to family friendly and entertainment options, from smaller and easier fixes to more robust and larger overhauls, a diverse set of Miami citizens readily contributed their thoughts and suggestions around making Miami International Airport more usable and representative of our community. This is a testament to their concern, their vision for a better airport, and their willingness to be partners in the process of achieving it. We look forward to seeing how MIA is able to maximize some of these ideas and solutions!

THANK YOU

Many thanks to the **hundreds of people who engaged** at some level in this dialogue. We are **exploring future topics** for **100 Great Ideas** community conversations and look forward to future collaborations, brainstorming sessions and solutions built from great minds **coming together in the spirit of community improvement**.

Thank you as well, to the Director of Miami International Airport, Emilio Gonzales, Chief of Staff Joe Napoli, and Communication Manager John Heffernan for taking the time to review all 150 ideas, and for meeting with members of the 100GIs group to discuss the future of the airport. We look forward to seeing what comes next.

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