



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week:

**"All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing."
-Edmund Burke - Irish orator, philosopher, & politician (1729-1797)**

FRIDAY, 1/13/06

[Rising Costs Threaten Road Building](#)

(01/13/2006 © Tampa Tribune)

Skyrocketing construction costs are casting a shadow over millions of dollars in highway projects planned for Pasco County in the coming years. The cost of road construction grew 60 percent in the past year alone, raising serious questions as to how the state's Department of Transportation will align its budget with the cost for projects.

[Officials oppose moving Manatee out of Tampa Bay council](#)

(01/13/2006 © Bradenton Herald)

MANATEE - Two of the three state senators representing Manatee County said Thursday they oppose moving Manatee County from a Tampa Bay regional planning board to one based in Fort Myers. State Sens. Mike Bennett, R-Bradenton, and Les Miller Jr., D-Tampa, opposed the suggestion from the state Office of Program Policy Analysis & Government Accountability (OPPAGA).

[Commissioners differ on gas tax hike](#)

(01/13/2006 © Bradenton Herald)

EAST MANATEE - As the debate over a proposed gasoline tax hike in Manatee County revs up, county commissioners Ron Getman and Donna Hayes offered opposing opinions at Thursday's East Manatee Republican Committee meeting. Getman, the guest speaker for the event, spoke in favor of the proposed 5-cent-per-gallon increase, citing the need for more funds for roadway projects in Manatee County.

[Offer gas-tax alternatives](#)

(01/13/2006 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

Opponents should specify how they'd fund transportation needs The Manatee County Commission has scheduled a public forum at the Civic Center Jan. 23 to discuss how to fund an ever-growing list of transportation needs. But Commissioner Donna Hayes and state Rep. Ron Reagan aren't waiting to express their opposition to one long-discussed option -- a nickel-a-gallon increase in the county's gas tax.

[Vasco Peeples Bridge poses problems](#)

(01/13/2006 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

PUNTA GORDA -- Kimley-Horn traffic consultants Dale Jamison and Rick Reiff shared with residents Thursday what they saw as improvements along the West Marion Avenue in Punta Gorda Isles. The city commissioned the study to look at what effects the construction of the anticipated 700 condos at the west end of Marion Avenue will have on traffic.

[Bridge panel approaching crunch time](#)

(01/13/2006 © Northwest Florida Daily News)

The future of a second bridge connecting Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa Island should take shape in the next several weeks. The Emerald Coast Bridge Authority is studying three potential toll bridge corridors in an effort to relieve traffic on U.S. Highway 98. A final decision on which route, if any, to take should come in March.

[Bridge's closing creates chaos](#)

(01/13/2006 © Miami Herald)

Carlos Franco, a truck driver, sums up in two words the ordeal of driving from Caracas, Venezuela's capital, to the country's principal seaport: mission impossible. Travel chaos is just one of the woes stemming from the closure last week of a bridge that supports the 30-kilometer highway down to the coast. Economic problems and political tensions have followed.

THURSDAY, 1/12/06

[Sales tax increase sought for transit](#)

(01/12/2006 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

A coalition of Broward business leaders will launch an education campaign next week to push for a penny sales tax increase to boost mass transit in the county. More than 30 leaders in the transportation industry and key businesses -- each recruited for their technical and financial support -- have been invited to the kickoff Jan. 17 at Nova Southeastern University in Davie.

[TRANSPORTATION: Plan for boomers](#)

(01/12/2006 © Florida Times-Union)

If you were born between 1946 and 1964, you are Jacksonville's baby boomers. The last of you just hit 40 in 2004, and the youngest of the bunch will turn 60 this year. And what does that have to do with transportation in Jacksonville? All the planning for the future? That future is you. Transportation officials are trying to plan for 25 years out, or 2030. Over that time period, 28 million extra people are expected in Florida. And more than a quarter of Jacksonville's population will be over the age of 65, according to the Census Bureau.

[County gets options for longer runway](#)

(01/12/2006 © Miami Herald)

A new expansion plan at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport could keep a

Dania Beach neighborhood intact, even as it allows the county to build a longer runway to address an increasing number of flight delays at Broward's main airport.

[Developers to pick up tab](#)

(01/12/2006 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

To speed the construction of tens of millions of dollars worth of commercial real estate projects, a group of seven developers begrudgingly offered to pay \$3.5 million in improvements to the intersection of Honore Avenue and Clark Road. On Wednesday, Sarasota County commissioners accepted.

[Impact fees: Truth and consequences](#)

(01/12/2006 © Ocala Star Banner)

Forget about the studies estimating the tab for roads in Marion County over the next quarter of century at more than \$1 billion. Forget that transportation planners no longer pretend traffic congestion can be prevented, only managed. Forget that the urban sprawl that has brought us to this juncture is only going to continue unabated for the foreseeable future.

[Officials say I-95 exit could be privately funded](#)

(01/12/2006 © St. Augustine Record)

A daily bottleneck and traffic nightmare at Interstate 95's off-ramp at County Road 210 may be smoothed out by the end of this year using private dollars, St. Johns County officials learned Tuesday. Falcon South Jacksonville Properties, developer of the 3,000-acre Twin Creeks project along 2 miles of County Road 210, announced Tuesday that it would pay for extra lanes and improvements to the off-ramp at C.R. 210.

[Money crunch takes toll on county roads](#)

(01/12/2006 © St. Petersburg Times)

BROOKSVILLE - The rising cost of building roads has outpaced revenue from Hernando County's impact fees, leaving the county to wrest additional road money from new developments while taxpayers pick up the rest of the tab. "The problem is that the costs are accelerating faster than our fees are accelerating," said Dennis Dix, the county's transportation expert.

WEDNESDAY, 1/11/06

[Untapped remedy](#)

(01/11/2006 © Orlando Sentinel)

Our position: Smarter engineering is needed to stem the region's traffic dangers. January 11, 2006 With all the attention that police focused last year on dangerous drivers, the number of traffic fatalities should have gone down. Instead, Florida broke another crash-death record.

[Legislators asked to give up free parking perks at airport](#)

(01/11/2006 © Orlando Sentinel)

Beginning this month state legislators will be denied a long-standing privilege at Orlando International Airport for big shots and elected officials: free parking. For years legislators

have been issued special parking cards that allowed them to avoid the \$15-per-day fee, but a new ban on gifts from lobbyists and their clients means the freebie is over.

[Sarasota starts red-light camera test](#)

(01/11/2006 © Englewood Sun Herald)

ENGLEWOOD -- Red-light runners beware. Sarasota County is scheduled to begin a red-light camera pilot program that would photograph and notify -- but not penalize -- drivers who run red lights. The three-month program, designed to collect data to prove red-light camera's worth, could begin as soon as next week.

[Driving again may take doctor's OK](#)

(01/11/2006 © Tallahassee Democrat)

Florida seniors who insist on remaining behind the wheel of their cars could have to navigate more hoops to stay there under a legislative proposal taking shape. The Florida Senate is considering making drivers who have suspended or revoked driver's licenses undergo medical examinations before they can be re-licensed to drive.

[State drops helmet proposal](#)

(01/11/2006 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

TALLAHASSEE -- Ride on. Florida highway-safety officials have dropped a proposal that would have made it harder for motorcyclists to thunder down the roads without wearing helmets. The proposal, which surfaced in September after a federal report showed increasing motorcycle deaths in Florida, would have required bikers to carry \$50,000 in health insurance if they wanted to leave their lids at home. Current law requires only \$10,000 in insurance coverage.

[EPA to lower fuel economy ratings for 2008](#)

(01/11/2006 © Bradenton Herald)

WASHINGTON - Consumers may be in for a different kind of sticker shock starting with 2008 model cars, trucks and SUVs. Estimates of how far vehicles will travel on a gallon of gas are dropping by as much as 30 percent - not because gas mileage is getting worse but because the testing that determines miles per gallon is getting better, regulators say.

[Ala. law would ban cell phone usage by young drivers](#)

(01/11/2006 © Pensacola News Journal)

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. (AP) Drivers under 18 would not be allowed to talk on a cell phone while driving a vehicle in Alabama under a bill to be introduced in the Legislature's regular session, which begins Tuesday. Rep. Jim McClendon, R-Springville, said his bill deals only with teenage drivers because they are the least experienced.

TUESDAY, 1/10/06

[Half an answer](#)

(01/10/2006 © Orlando Sentinel)

Our position: It's good to see DOT pushing seat belts, but a tougher law is a better answer. January 10, 2006 Too bad Florida still does not have a law requiring all

motorists to wear seat belts. That's why Florida Transportation Secretary Denver Stutler is forced to resort to a public-education campaign to boost seat-belt usage by adults.

[Overlapping boundaries don't bother local officials](#)

(01/10/2006 © Citrus County Chronicle)

Don't try and draw this on a map. Nobody would understand it. It's one thing to have a lot of government agencies, but when their jurisdictional boundaries don't coincide, as happens in Florida, it can be a headache, not to mention impossible to put on a single map. For example, there are six Department of Environmental Protection districts, seven Department of Transportation (DOT) districts (and the Florida Turnpike Enterprise), five regional water management districts, 11 regional planning districts, eight regional districts for statewide economic development — which are used for designating planning areas for the State's Strategic Intermodal System — and five regional offices of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

[End of the road getting crowded](#)

(01/10/2006 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

It's the end of the road for Harbour Heights residents, which is the way they like it. Unless a New York-based megadeveloper plans to build more than 1,200 homes and a huge commercial complex along that road. Then, being at the end of the road could be very disagreeable for Harbour Heights residents.

[A1A work aimed at hydroplaning](#)

(01/10/2006 © Florida Today)

A project to resod medians and shoulders along State Road A1A should prevent vehicles from hydroplaning in rainwater that settles on the roadway. Crews from the Florida Department of Transportation are ripping up grass and cleaning out sand along the shoulders and median and replacing it with new sod along stretches of A1A from the Pineda Causeway to State Road 520.

[I-75-New Tampa link still possible](#)

(01/10/2006 © St. Petersburg Times)

TAMPA - The long-standing dream of connecting New Tampa to Interstate 275 has a new partner at the Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority. The government agency agreed on Monday to look into jump-starting the East-West Road that New Tampa has discussed for nearly two decades. Another road-building agency, the Florida Turnpike Enterprise, has dropped the project because it couldn't make the financing work.

[County gasses up effort for new tax](#)

(01/10/2006 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

The price of a gallon of regular unleaded gas was as steep as \$2.36 last weekend in Manatee, according to Automotive.com, which tracks gas prices. So, county commissioners want backing from Manatee's six municipalities before they dare consider increasing the local gas tax by another nickel per gallon.

[Giving Drivers More Access to Fast Lanes](#)

(01/10/2006 © Gainesville Sun)

For drivers like David G. Leonard, E-ZPass used to be anything but easy. E-ZPass, a plastic transponder that is mounted to a car's windshield, lets motorists zip by highway tollbooths in several states, including New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. But Mr. Leonard, an actuary who makes frequent business trips to the New York area, is based in Ormond Beach, Fla. - outside E-ZPass territory.

MONDAY, 1/9/06

[Lee considers toll for future roads](#)

(01/09/2006 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

If County Road 951 and a Colonial Expressway are built, both could be paid for by making them toll roads. The idea has been discussed during the last year, but Tuesday the Lee County commissioners will consider hiring a consultant to do a traffic and revenue study to show how the two projects could potentially be paid for and whether tolls are a justified revenue source.

[I-4 guardrail project begins today in Hillsborough](#)

(01/09/2006 © St. Petersburg Times)

TAMPA - Six months after promising major safety improvements to Interstate 4 in Hillsborough County, state highway officials today will start building 22 miles of guardrails to prevent median crossover accidents. District officials of the Florida Department of Transportation accelerated the project after a rash of fatal accidents in summer.

[Editorial: Building roads for Indian River County's future](#)

(01/09/2006 © Stuart News)

If the County Commission thinks it's providing leadership on roads, it's going about it in a "roundabout" fashion. But then what else is new? Newly installed Chairman Art Neuberger's first order of business last week was to float — yet again — the notion of widening 27th and 43rd avenues.

[Bracing for the boom](#)

(01/09/2006 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Southwest Florida's older population potentially could double as aging baby boomers begin to retire. Today marks the 60th birthday for the first of the generation that was born in the prosperous post-World War II years and went on to become hippies and then yuppies. For the next 25 years, boomers will come to Lee County, already growing by 25,000 people a year.

[New building plan adds to traffic woes](#)

(01/09/2006 © Miami Herald)

A proposed project that would add condos, stores and offices to 66 acres next to Gulfstream Park -- and tens of thousands of cars and trucks to Hallandale Beach's congested streets -- goes before the Broward County Commission this week. Missing

from the plans for the Village at Gulfstream Park: a detailed plan for handling all the extra traffic.

TRADE & TRANSPORTATION

(01/09/2006 © Miami Herald)

If you look at South Florida's economy, you have to look at the global economy, said economist Tony Villamil. With Latin America and the Caribbean poised to grow about 4 percent, that means money flowing into South Florida. "We're going to see another year where Venezuela will continue to expand its imports of South Florida services, along with the rest of Latin America," said Villamil.

Developers may have to pay \$5M before building on U.S. 41

(01/09/2006 © Naples Daily News)

Developers hoping to build along a stretch of U.S. 41 between Estero and San Carlos Park could have to cough up \$5 million if they want to start laying their foundations before 2011. A Wal-Mart Supercenter planned for the northeast corner of U.S. 41 and Estero Parkway is among several developments that face construction delays unless the road, from Corkscrew Road to San Carlos Boulevard, is widened to accommodate traffic.

***Floridians for Better Transportation (FBT)** is a statewide business and transportation association dedicated to making transportation safer and more efficient in Florida. FBT has a diverse membership of 150 businesses, organizations, and individuals, including the Florida Chamber of Commerce, the Florida Transportation Builders Association, Publix Super Markets, AAA Auto Club South, SunTrust Bank, the Florida Institute of Consulting Engineers, the Florida Public Transportation Association, the Florida Ports Council, the Florida MPO Advisory Council, the Florida Airports Council, and numerous local businesses, Chambers of Commerce, MPOs, and transit providers all across the Sunshine State.*

www.bettertransportation.org