



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week:

**"A leader knows what's best to do;
a manager knows merely how best to do it." - Ken Adelman**

FRIDAY, 3/3/06

[Record number of fatalities on Florida's roads in 2005](#)

03/03/2006 © Bradenton Herald

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. - There was a record number of fatalities on Florida's roads during 2005, transportation officials said. There were 3,515 traffic deaths last year, the state Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles said Thursday. The previous record was set in 2004 with 3,257 fatalities.

[Firms Line Up To Build Private Toll Road](#)

03/03/2006 © Tampa Bay Online

TAMPA - When the Tampa-Hillsborough County Expressway Authority posted the first ads inviting companies to build a private toll road in New Tampa, it didn't know what kind of response it would get. "We just hoped for a better-than-dismal turnout," said Ralph Mervine, acting director. So the overflow crowd in dark suits at Thursday's East-West Road workshop was a welcome sight.

[Data puts panel in driver's seat](#)

03/03/2006 © Northwest Florida Daily News

PANAMA CITY — The Northwest Florida Transportation Corridor Authority is entering its second phase of work with a map in its hand, an IOU in its pocket and a vision. Phase one officially ended Thursday when Wiley Page, a program manager with PBS&J engineers, presented the board with a slicked-up document full of information about U.S. Highway 98 from Escambia County east to Wakulla County.

[New homes approved despite road worries](#)

03/03/2006 © Bradenton Herald

MANATEE - Plans for two housing projects totaling 188 homes in East Manatee were approved Thursday by Manatee County commissioners. They grumbled about traffic congestion on overtaxed roads in northern Manatee County before allowing Ryland Group Inc., of Oldsmar, to build 145 more homes in Oakleaf Hammock, north of Mendoza Road and east of Interstate 75.

[County making builders wait](#)

03/03/2006 © St. Petersburg Times

Developers are in a gridlock of their own so that drivers won't have to be. They're being told: Wait for the roads or pay for what you need.

[Think outside the car to pave transit's future](#)

03/03/2006 © Ft. Myers News-Press

Widening roads, and building new ones, can do only so much to relieve traffic congestion in Lee County. When a metropolitan area's traffic gets too congested, drivers think of taking a bus, walking, riding a bicycle or calling a taxi instead. For alternative transportation to work, it needs more people concentrated in an area with a high frequency of bus routes, bicycles lanes and sidewalks.

[National council takes stand against airport relocation due to threat to nature](#)

03/03/2006 © Panama City News Herald

Local activists concerned about relocating the Panama City-Bay County International Airport to West Bay met with a national organization in Tallahassee on Thursday and unveiled a campaign to prevent what it says is destructive development in the Panhandle.

THURSDAY, 3/2/06

[2020 hindsight will be too late: South Florida Sun-Sentinel](#)

03/02/2006 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel

Picture South Florida in 2020 -- just a teenager's life away. The population has continued to grow, with many new immigrants from Latin America and the Caribbean. There are more retirees than ever, both those seeking warmer weather and the vast number of Baby Boomers now in their elder years. But traffic has taken on frightening dimensions.

[Chico's expansion on hold](#)

03/02/2006 © Ft. Myers News-Press

Fort Myers-based Chico's FAS is reconsidering plans to build a new corporate headquarters south of Alico Road because of rising construction costs and traffic concerns, executives said Wednesday. The national clothing retailer bought 105 acres south of Alico Road and west of Interstate 75 in November for \$37.8 million, including \$5.4 million in road impact fees.

[The future of east-west traffic](#)

03/02/2006 © Miami Herald

The Miami-Dade Expressway Authority has a good idea: Collect tolls more equitably and without toll booths that currently slow down traffic. This is the crux of MDX's plan to turn five major roads into an "Open Road Tolling" system where motorists would be billed electronically as they drive under strategically placed sensors. But MDX will have to do a much better job of explaining the plan.

[Manatee's new east-west route sparks debate](#)

03/02/2006 © Bradenton Herald

MANATEE - Tom McCade used his finger to draw an imaginary map on the counter at his Firestone store at DeSoto Square mall Wednesday. "Here's how I see it," said McCade, whose store is at 303 U.S. 301 Blvd. W. "You only have two roads going east to west right now, State Road 64 and 70, and you have all these developments. Everyone comes down these two roads and there are no other routes.

[Regional traffic study, subdivision get go-ahead](#)

03/02/2006 © Daytona Beach News-Journal

NEW SMYRNA BEACH -- The City Commission moved ahead this week on a regional traffic study and a development agreement for a new village-style subdivision along State Road 44. The City Commission on Tuesday authorized staff to begin negotiations to choose a consultant for a regional transportation study.

[Progress Made on Roads Designed to Ease U.S. 27 Traffic](#)

03/02/2006 © Lakeland Ledger

BARTOW -- One of several projects to get traffic off U.S. 27 and onto alternative roads in Northeast Polk County moved forward last week when county commissioners shifted North Ridge Community Redevelopment Agency money into place to pay for the design phase of the Pine Tree Trail.

[Behavior modification](#)

03/02/2006 © Gainesville Sun

Two years ago, two UF researchers set out to determine why people run red lights, and whether better designed intersections might cut down on the practice. After studying driver behavior at several intersections in Gainesville and Daytona Beach, the researchers, Scott S. Washburn and Kenneth G. Courage, concluded: "It is extremely unlikely, even at a 'perfectly' engineered intersection, that red light running could be totally prevented."

WEDNESDAY, 3/1/06

[Expectations Rise For Expressway](#)

(03/01/2006 © Tampa Bay Online)

TAMPA - Spend a few hours watching the progress of work crews building the elevated, reversible lanes on the Lee Roy Selmon Expressway, and you begin to believe they will have it open by summer's end.

[New highway coming to Manatee](#)

(03/01/2006 © Bradenton Herald)

MANATEE - Thousands of Manatee County residents someday will drive on a major highway called 44th Avenue East from Bradenton to Lakewood Ranch. That road was born Tuesday. County commissioners placed it squarely on the drawing boards by picking the route for the highway that will be at least four lanes from 19th Street East to Lakewood Ranch Boulevard at an estimated cost of between \$150 million and \$200 million.

[Welcome to life in the slow lane](#)

(03/01/2006 © Gainesville Sun)

Being stuck in traffic is a good thing. Or so say local transportation planners. Take Newberry Road as an example. Vehicle trips on the stretch in front of The Oaks Mall have actually dropped in recent years, which one planner attributes to congestion forcing drivers to pick alternate routes or take mass transit.

[Support grows for U.S. 41 project](#)

(03/01/2006 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

A fourth developer has pledged to contribute to pay interest on a loan to speed up U.S. 41's widening from Estero to San Carlos Park. But even if the \$3.5 million goal is met, a county-state fight over a retention pond could delay the project from the target start date of spring 2007.

[Cellphone parking lot to ease traffic hangups](#)

(03/01/2006 © Miami Herald)

Drivers picking up passengers at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport will soon be able to idle in a free parking lot while they monitor an electronic flight arrival board and await that "I'm here!" phone call.

[One day, a bus may go to airport](#)

(03/01/2006 © Tallahassee Democrat)

You'd think you must have a world-beater of an idea if you got Leon County Commissioners Tony Grippa and Bob Rackleff - thorns from different roses - to agree on it. But don't plan on schlepping your roller bags out to the bus stop the next time you head to the airport. It may be a while before StarMetro offers service there.

[Osceola goes outside line to seek help on toll roads](#)

(03/01/2006 © Orlando Sentinel)

Osceola County officials are continuing to press hard for new toll roads to be built by the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority. Hoping to blunt the effects of an onslaught of new residents during the next 20 years, Osceola officials have asked the authority to consider building a limited-access toll road across the county.

TUESDAY, 2/28/06

[Group question's FDOT's actions](#)

(02/28/2006 © Englewood Sun Herald)

SARASOTA -- A public hearing next week in Tallahassee is supposed to address the huge shortfall in dollars in the Florida Department of Transportation's five-year work program. The Florida Transportation Commission will hear testimony from many interested groups, including the Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization.

[Letter:Pennies for paving](#)

(02/28/2006 © Florida Today)

Look outside county for road repair funds - It seems strange to me that Brevard County officials are discussing raising the sales tax to 7 percent at a time when Gov. Jeb Bush

wants to return supposedly excess tax revenues to the taxpayers. We certainly need better roads, but why can't the County Commission persuade our delegates to the state Legislature to earmark some of the tax surplus the road improvements we need in Brevard and throughout the state?

[Traffic excess is red flag](#)

(02/28/2006 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Population and road traffic are expanding so rapidly in Southwest Florida that drivers here are doomed to big-city delays, frustrations and a declining quality of life unless we find ways to rein in growth, or at least slow it to give infrastructure the room to stay ahead of the curve.

[Americans Are Cautiously Open to Gas Tax Rise, Poll Shows](#)

(02/28/2006 © Lakeland Ledger)

Americans are overwhelmingly opposed to a higher federal gasoline tax, but a significant number would go along with an increase if it reduced global warming or made the United States less dependent on foreign oil, according to the latest New York Times/CBS News poll.

[Coming your way: Ethanol stations](#)

(02/28/2006 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

If you watched the Olympics or caught the truck race during Speed Weeks, it was hard to miss General Motors' new "Live Green - Go Yellow" campaign. The auto giant used both events to promote its flexible fuel vehicles that use either regular gas or E85, a blend of 85 percent ethanol and 15 percent gasoline. So, what is all this talk about "Live Green - Go Yellow?"

[Small airport draws interest from SRQ](#)

(02/28/2006 © Bradenton Herald)

MANATEE - Airport officials are eyeing a small, private airport north of Port Manatee for possible purchase. Located 10 miles north of Palmetto on U.S. 41, Airport Manatee is one of the largest privately owned public-use airports in Florida. The 345-acre Airport Manatee has a 3,600-foot runway and serves about 100 private aircraft based there.

[Leaders say tax improved transit but more must be done](#)

(02/28/2006 © Miami Herald)

Has traffic in Miami-Dade County really improved since the half-penny sales tax was approved in 2002? The \$165 million generated annually for transit projects has paid for a nearly 50 percent increase in the number of buses to 1,031, said Roosevelt Bradley, Miami-Dade Transit director.

MONDAY, 2/27/06

[Cost of doing business soars as traffic worsens](#)

(02/27/2006 © Miami Herald)

Since becoming group president of Regions Bank in Broward and Palm Beach counties three years ago, Evan T. Rees calculated he has logged some 100,000 miles on South

Florida's increasingly crowded roadways. Like a lot of fellow commuters, Rees leaves his house earlier in the morning and his office later in the evening simply to avoid the rush-hour crush.

[Traffic, like housing costs, threatens our economy](#)

(02/27/2006 © Miami Herald)

As most South Florida drivers have learned, the key to a successful commute is timing. Leave your home too late in the morning -- even 15 minutes -- and you'll end up snarled in traffic. The same rule applies during the evening commute only in reverse -- try to slip out of the office a bit early and chances are you'll only end up stalled among thousands of homeward-bound drivers.

[Growth overwhelms roads](#)

(02/27/2006 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

A section of Gunnery Road bothers Louise Rubin of Lehigh Acres more than any other road in Lee County. Rubin, 71, finds it dangerous and rough, and wishes the road were widened to four lanes. "It's the one road that really breaks my back," she said. "It's a horror. Someday they're supposed to widen it. What in the hell are they waiting on?"

[New ways sought to ease traffic congestion](#)

(02/27/2006 © Miami Herald)

Broward road warriors may be relieved to hear that some of the county's key arteries may be getting more lanes. Next month the Florida Department of Transportation expects to begin studying adding a lane in each direction on Interstate 95 between Oakland Park Boulevard and Glades Road in Boca Raton.

[Editorial: Tri-Rail](#)

(02/27/2006 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

ISSUE: Free rides for seniors proposed. South Florida Regional Transportation Authority members were wise to table a proposal to allow senior citizens to ride Tri-Rail for free. The idea is worth bringing back for further discussion, but in the end members must recognize that the railroad simply can't afford a revenue loss like that at this time. It may not ever be able to afford it.

[Electronic tolling grid to replace cash booths](#)

(02/27/2006 © Miami Herald)

The Miami-Dade Expressway Authority is finalizing plans to install an electronic tolling system that would dramatically affect the commuting experience for hundreds of thousands of South Florida motorists who use the system's five toll roads every day. MDX plans to demolish its traditional toll plazas and by 2010 replace them with a cashless, free-flowing system.

[Building the perfect road](#)

(02/27/2006 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

Editor's note: With thousands moving to Florida each month, expanding road systems is a never-ending struggle for local governments. The following story begins a three-part series that shows how counties plan and build road projects.

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 180 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