



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week: **"Status Quo is Latin for 'the mess we're in.'"**
- Ronald Reagan

MONDAY, 3/14/05

[Talk tough in Tallahassee over growth](#)

(03/14/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

Michele Moen fears it won't be long before Volusia County is saturated with urban sprawl, becoming an indistinguishable extension of metropolitan Orlando. "We're losing (Volusia County) chunk by chunk," said Moen, a member of Volusia Citizens for Responsible Growth.

[Airline industry could face pilot, controller shortages in 10 years](#)

(03/14/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Within the next decade, tens of thousands of veteran airline pilots and air traffic controllers plan to retire, leaving a potential dearth in experience that could cause airport delays and make the skies riskier, aviation experts say.

[UM gives hybrid vehicle owners half off parking fee](#)

(03/14/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

In a small green gesture for car-conscious South Florida, the University of Miami is ready to reward students for driving hybrids. Starting in August, some hybrid-driving students, professors and staff can shave off 50 percent of their parking permit price, which can run up to \$352 per year.

[Collier considers Marco toll](#)

(03/14/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Here we go again. A Southwest Florida island hot spot. A crowded bridge in need of repairs. And the prospect of a toll to cover the costs. Only this time it's Marco Island not Sanibel or Boca Grande. Next month, transportation officials in Collier County are scheduled to begin a \$1 million study to determine whether tolls can and should be used to expand the two-lane Jolley Bridge over the Marco River.

[Untying Downtown](#)

(03/14/2005 © Jacksonville Business Journal)

State's \$150M I-95/I-295 interchange will ease congestion, create new Downtown entry. Rubberneckers and noise are the big early concerns in the building of a huge interchange where Interstate 10 and Interstate 95 meet near Downtown in an outdated narrow stretch.

[Slow ride: Concessions vs. congestion](#)

(03/14/2005 © Naples Daily News)

Think traffic out there is bad enough? Collier County traffic managers do: They've halted projects and forced millions of dollars in concessions from two dozen developers in the past year because of the road congestion the planned developments will cause. The county is forcing developers to change the way they do business along some of the area's gridlocked roads.

[A terrible sign](#)

(03/14/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Florida Department of Transportation Secretary Jose Abreu may be about to sell Florida taxpayers down the river. Ever so quietly -- and certainly contrary to the spirit, if not the letter, of state and federal law -- Mr. Abreu is considering agreements that would allow major billboard companies to rebuild illegal signs that were blown to pieces during last year's quartet of hurricanes.

TUESDAY, 3/15/05

[Group Organizes Push For Better Highways](#)

(03/15/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

TALLAHASSEE - A statewide group dedicated to easing gridlock is using a poll it commissioned to spur Florida lawmakers to set aside more money to unclog the state's busiest roads. Floridians for Better Transportation released the poll Monday and kicked off a Web-based campaign to press lawmakers to provide more money for transportation.

[New poll shows Floridians' frustrations over traffic, roads is growing](#)

(03/15/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Three-fourths of Florida voters believe elected leaders should put more money into transportation, according to a Mason-Dixon survey commissioned by Floridians for Better Transportation (FBT), a statewide transportation advocacy organization.

[Group pushes for traffic-relief tax](#)

(03/15/2005 © Lehigh News Star)

TALLAHASSEE Three-fourths of Floridians believe the state should spend more to address choking traffic congestion, a sentiment that businesses hope to drive home to state lawmakers. Floridians for Better Transportation, a group of transport and development companies, the Florida Chamber of Commerce, Publix Super Markets and SunTrust Banks Inc., released a poll Monday to kick off a campaign they hope will convince lawmakers to support higher taxes.

[Traffic light bill killed](#)

(03/15/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

TALLAHASSEE - A bill that would allow counties and cities to install cameras on traffic signals and photograph vehicles that run red lights is all but dead for the 2005 session, Rep. Ron Reagan said Monday.

[Big Dig Consultant: Tunnels May Be Unsafe](#)

(03/15/2005 © Lakeland Ledger)

BOSTON The independent engineering specialist who led an investigation into leaks at the \$14.6 billion Big Dig project says he can no longer vouch for the safety of its tunnels.

[Passenger traffic continues to soar at OIA](#)

(03/15/2005 © Orlando Business Journal)

After completing its busiest year ever in 2004, Orlando International Airport saw yet more increases in passengers and traffic in January.

[District 7 DOT Secretary Hartmann Retiring](#)

(03/15/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

TAMPA - Kenneth Hartmann, secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation's 7th district, announced Monday he is retiring effective June 30.

WEDNESDAY, 3/16/05

['Great state of wait': Florida](#)

(03/16/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Florida's transportation system "drives" our state's economy. Virtually everything we eat, drink, wear or buy is provided through transportation. Today the lack of funding for new, better roads is threatening that system and, with it, our very way of life.

[Legislature: Expressway bill on its way to House floor](#)

(03/16/2005 © Naples Daily News)

TALLAHASSEE — A proposal to establish the Southwest Florida Expressway Authority is speeding toward a vote on the House floor after passing its final committee hurdle in the House on Tuesday.

[Broward approves thousands of new residences in Lauderdale, Hollywood](#)

(03/16/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

The eastward march of Broward County's development picked up speed on Tuesday as county commissioners agreed to allow 3,000 more residences to be built in downtown Fort Lauderdale. It also gave Hollywood the power to better use blighted parts of its city core for new housing. Fort Lauderdale wanted the right to add 13,000 residential units downtown, but city officials could not overcome concern that roads, schools and utilities could not keep pace with such rapid growth.

[Lee OKs 5-year bike, sidewalks plan](#)

(03/16/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

A five-year plan to build 35 miles of sidewalks and bike paths, roughly the distance from Fort Myers to Naples, has been approved by Lee County commissioners.

[Quick fix](#)

(03/16/2005 © Naples Daily News)

While Marco Island and Florida Department of Transportation officials continue to debate the true condition of the 36-year-old Judge S.S. Jolley Bridge, one top DOT official made it clear: The bridge will get an important repair before the June 1 start of the 2005 hurricane season.

[Toll idea advances despite opposition](#)

(03/16/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

The state is moving forward with controversial plans to build toll lanes down the center of Interstate 4 as a way to ease the bumper-to-bumper traffic that plagues Central Florida's most-hated road. Work on the toll roads, derided by critics as "Lexus lanes," could begin in four years and be done by 2013.

[County to start toll-road talks](#)

(03/16/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Osceola County commissioners are in talks to build the county's second toll road, although they made it clear they will not take on new debt until they know more details. A study about the traffic and tolls needed for the \$35 million Poinciana Parkway won't be ready for another week, developers said.

THURSDAY, 3/17/05

[Lehman leaves a legacy in S. Florida](#)

(03/17/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

South Floridians can see former U.S. Rep. William Lehman's legacy through their car windshields or out the windows of their trains: Tri-Rail, Metrorail, the downtown Miami Metromover, Interstate 595 and I-95 and dozens of other bridges and roads. Rep. Lehman, once one of the most powerful congressmen to hold a firm grip on the nation's transportation spending, died Wednesday.

[Going slow in fast lane? Look out for legislators](#)

(03/17/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

TALLAHASSEE -- Slow drivers in the fast lane had better beware. You're the latest threat to motorists' sanity and one of the leading causes of road rage, state lawmakers say. As a result, lawmakers are moving to make it illegal to drive the speed limit or lower in passing lanes if doing so holds up the natural flow of traffic.

[County Likes the Idea of Toll Road Near Poinciana](#)

(03/17/2005 © Lakeland Ledger)

County commissioners agreed Wednesday to work with Poinciana's developers and Osceola County officials on the construction of a new toll road between Poinciana and Loughman.

[Median Toll Lanes In Works](#)

(03/17/2005 © Lakeland Ledger)

LAKELAND -- A proposed express toll road in the Interstate 4 median through Seminole and Orange counties could alleviate gridlock for Polk County motorists headed east.

[HOV rule changes may not be too bad](#)

(03/17/2005 © Miami Herald)

In a reversal that will affect hundreds of thousands of Interstate 95 commuters, state officials late Wednesday significantly scaled back wildly unpopular High Occupancy Vehicle rules slated to go into effect July 1. The Florida Department of Transportation originally planned on transforming the I-95 HOV lanes into a 24-hour, seven-day operation, in both directions.

[Turnpike is getting safer, but not wider](#)

(03/17/2005 © Miami Herald)

Workers are installing median guardrails on a 17-mile segment of the Florida Turnpike between the Snapper Creek service plaza and Florida City in south Miami-Dade County. Homestead residents and city officials had thought the heavily used highway was finally getting a much needed lane expansion when they saw the work starting. They were disappointed to find out otherwise.

[Bridging the funding gap](#)

(03/17/2005 © Northwest Florida Daily News)

Local transportation planners are being asked to pledge \$500,000 from future road projects to guarantee a state loan to the Emerald Coast Bridge Authority to continue its study of a bridge to link Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa Island. The Okaloosa-Walton Transportation Planning Organization at some point also might have to give up another \$1.2 million in road work to help fund a concept study for U.S. Highway 98 from the Alabama line east to Panama City.

FRIDAY, 3/18/05

[Surging pump prices may fuel gas tax holiday](#)

(03/18/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

TALLAHASSEE - With gas prices higher than \$2 a gallon in Florida, a Democratic state lawmaker said Thursday he may push for a repeat of the monthlong break on the gas tax.

[Rail transit could solve local traffic congestion](#)

(03/18/2005 © Miami Herald)

Miami has bumper-to-bumper traffic in the morning, noon, afternoon, evening and night. What used to be off-peak hours really no longer exists. "Rush hour" is now "crawl for hours." About the only time there seem to be open lanes is around 3 a.m. when most people are asleep.

[Legislature: Expressway bill up for final House vote today](#)

(03/18/2005 © Naples Daily News)

TALLAHASSEE — House members on Thursday gave preliminary approval to the Southwest Florida Expressway Authority, setting up a final House vote as early as today.

[Help sought to speed urban road projects](#)

(03/18/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

WEST PALM BEACH — Palm Beach County transportation planners Thursday asked a representative of an independent board that oversees state road construction for help in expediting road projects that cut through downtown areas.

[A billion air travelers forecast for '15](#)

(03/18/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

WASHINGTON - More than 1 billion people a year will be boarding planes in the United States within a decade, nearly double the number now using an aviation system showing signs of being overburdened.

[State looks to bump Feds role from parkway project](#)

(03/18/2005 © Citrus County Chronicle)

With Suncoast Parkway 2 stalled by a lawsuit and a standoff with the Federal Highway Administration, the state is looking for ways to move the project forward, including dumping the current environmental study, the project director said Thursday.

[Emerald Coast Bridge Authority gets its guarantee](#)

(03/18/2005 © Northwest Florida Daily News)

NICEVILLE — The Emerald Coast Bridge Authority will be able to complete a study of a toll bridge to link Fort Walton Beach to Okaloosa Island after local transportation planners on Thursday narrowly agreed to repay a \$500,000 loan, if necessary.