



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week:

**"I always throw my golf club in the direction I'm going."
- Ronald Reagan**

FRIDAY, 4/7/06

[For Whom the Toll Swells](#)

April 2006 – Florida Trend magazine

Florida's growing reliance on toll roads to keep pace with growth attracts new investor interest. - From the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority to the new North Florida Transportation Corridor Authority in the fastgrowing Panhandle, Florida has turned to toll roads to hoist itself from the muck of transportation policies that haven't kept pace with growth.

[Editorial: Rent cars, ease traffic](#)

04/07/2006 © Palm Beach Post

An idea that came out of the Orlando area - a \$2 to \$2.50 fee on cars rented by travelers with out-of-state licenses - also offers the best source yet for financing to help deal with the looming traffic gridlock in regions such as this. In recent years, the Legislature has sabotaged the auto registration, license and title fees sought by the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority.

[Council narrowly approves toll-road study](#)

04/07/2006 © Daytona Beach News-Journal

Despite environmental objections, the Volusia County Council in a split vote Thursday backed plans to study construction of a toll road through a conservation corridor. Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority officials announced plans recently to revive study of the proposed toll road to extend State Road 417 from Seminole County to Interstate 95 in Southeast Volusia.

[Fly-in community gets clearance](#)

04/07/2006 © Florida Today

Brevard County commissioners Thursday approved the River Fly-In development along the banks of the Indian River where it abuts Merritt Island Airport, and cleared the way for condos at the Siesta Mobile Home Park, also on Merritt Island. Wasim Niazi, a local pilot, proposed developing a 112-unit, nine-story building that would become home to only pilots and their families.

[Gasoline heading to \\$3 - or more](#)

04/06/06 – Philadelphia Inquirer

Drivers will face big increases again this summer as changes to regular and diesel fuel add to refiners' costs - Spring is barely here, but gasoline prices already have begun climbing toward - perhaps to beyond - \$3 a gallon for the summer driving season.

[Pays to advertise](#)

04/07/2006 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel

Tri-Rail is missing a golden opportunity to increase awareness of its expanded hourly service, and enticing motorists off the abominable, traffic-congested Interstate 95. They have built new towers to cross the tracks at many of the station stops that are adjacent to and easily visible from I-95. Yet there is no Tri-Rail sign or logo on any of these structures. Why not?

[N.J. man makes Fla. drive his job](#)

04/07/2006 © Ft. Myers News-Press

Gregg Taylor was one of the few people who arrived in Southwest Florida on Thursday only to turn around and head right back up North. Duty calls. The retired police officer runs Snowbird Car Service, a business in which he drives cars back and forth from Florida to New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The next few weeks are some of his busiest.

THURSDAY, 4/6/06

[Gallagher imagines toll road atop I-95](#)

04/06/06 – Palm Beach Post

A toll road built on top of Interstate 95 could be a way to ease Florida's growing transportation problems, Tom Gallagher said Wednesday. That's one way the next governor could "think outside the box" in the effort to meet what the Republican candidate for governor said is Florida's \$37 billion in unmet transportation needs.

[Costly Roads](#)

04/06/2006 © Ft. Myers-WINK (CBS)

The State Department of Transportation planned to extend Metro Parkway from Six Mile Cypress (where it currently ends) to Alico Road. Engineers expected the project to cost \$30 million. When bids went out last summer, construction companies wanted twice that, \$60 million. So, the DOT put the project on hold.

[Special process speeds up bridge building](#)

04/06/2006 © Daytona Beach News-Journal

The empty space where Graves Avenue once crossed Interstate 4 makes it hard to believe a replacement bridge could open in just four months. But officials say it will, thanks to a new building technique being used for the first time in Florida that reduces construction time and hassles for drivers.

[Moccasin Wallow Road likely won't connect port, I-75](#)

04/06/2006 © Bradenton Herald

State transportation officials have dropped, for the time being, further consideration of turning part of Moccasin Wallow Road into a connector between Port Manatee and Interstate 75. Port leaders' opposition to the idea prompted the Florida Department of Transportation to stop further study of it, an FDOT official said Wednesday.

[Local-option gas tax up for renewal](#)

04/06/2006 © Gainesville Sun

A public hearing will be held later this month to debate whether the Jackson County Commission should continue the local-option gas tax that has been in place for 20 years. The tax requires anyone who buys gas in Jackson County to pay the county six cents on every dollar's worth they purchase.

[Road gauge: Gridlock a new adopted level of service](#)

04/06/2006 © Charlotte Sun Herald

Finally, there's an official explanation why so many are stuck so often in traffic on deteriorating, crowded Charlotte County roads. The explanation: The state's Department of Transportation and the county "were unable to find a way to retain prior concurrency vesting." The solution: Traffic jams are the new "adopted level of service" on some area roads. In other words: Get used to it.

[Final highway board member named](#)

04/06/2006 © Ft. Myers News-Press

The process to widen Interstate 75 to 10 lanes took a step forward today as Gov. Jeb Bush appointed his final member to a transportation board. Bush named Katherine Green, a regional vice president with The Bonita Bay Group, as the final member of the eight-person Southwest Florida Expressway Authority board. The board could expedite the widening of I-75 to 10 lanes in Lee and Collier counties.

WEDNESDAY, 4/5/06

[Two paths on gas taxes](#)

04/05/2006 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune

Raise the county's tax while seeking more state and federal revenue - Manatee County officials should continue to fight for its fair share of federal and state gas taxes collected at local gas pumps. In the meantime, however, they should maximize a guaranteed source of transportation funding --the county's own gas tax.

[FAA runway decision reopens controversy](#)

04/05/2006 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel

The Federal Aviation Administration has ruled out an option for building a second major runway at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport that some county officials had hoped could resolve years of turmoil over the airport's expansion.

[Charlotte County's development deal for Babcock Ranch: more tie-ups here?](#)

04/05/2006 © Bonita Daily News

Charlotte County commissioners cleared the way for the development of Babcock Ranch on Tuesday but didn't do Lee County any favors in the process.

[\\$3.2 million widening of CR 951](#)

04/05/2006 © Ft. Myers-WBBH (NBC)

The Department of Transportation said because County Road 951, or Collier Boulevard, is used everyday by thousands of people to travel north and south through Collier County, the road needs to be widened a mile in each direction at the US 41 intersection.

[One Less Distraction](#)

04/05/2006 © Lakeland Ledger

The beginning driver has enough to think about when behind the wheel. A cell phone conversation shouldn't be in the mix. Fortunately, Florida senators seem to agree. Sen. Bill Posey, R-Rockledge, is sponsoring a bill to ban cell phone use by teenagers with learning permits when they are driving.

[Walking Cane Leads To Arrest, Charges, Fine For 62-Year-Old](#)

04/05/2006 © Miami-WPLG (ABC)

A 62-year old Ohio woman says she will never forget the new walking cane she bought while on a visit to Pompano Beach last month. That cane almost landed her in jail and led to her being charged with trying to carry a concealed weapon on board an aircraft. Judy Ford, who wears a brace on her leg and has had five surgeries on her foot, said she bought the \$12 cane with the ornately carved horse-head handle at Festival Flea Market. Judy says she had no idea the cane contained a blade that is more than a foot long.

TUESDAY, 4/4/06

[Siphoning gas taxes](#)

04/04/2006 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune

State needs to review region's low rate of return - Imagine this scenario: The next time you're at a gas station filling up your car, a fellow taps you on the shoulder, identifies himself as a state employee, and insists that you also top off the tank of the vehicle next to yours. Outrageous? Sure. But it's not much different from what appears to be happening to drivers in Manatee, Sarasota and Charlotte counties when they buy gas or renew their vehicle tags.

[Construction Begins On \\$120 Million Downtown Orlando Road Project](#)

04/04/2006 © Orlando-WFTV (ABC)

Construction started Monday morning on the biggest road project in downtown Orlando, the new interchange at I-4 and the 408 (East-West Expressway). It will take three years to complete the \$120 million project.

[Decline in traffic deaths spurs cautious optimism](#)

04/04/2006 © Bonita Daily News

After a record number of traffic fatalities in Lee County last year, things look to be returning to more normal levels, but only three months into 2006, it may be too soon to get excited, say local law enforcement officials. Statistics from the Lee County Department of Transportation and the Florida Highway Patrol show 32 people have died on Lee County roads this year, 27 percent less than the 44 who had died at this time last year.

[Bill would keep some teens off cellphones while driving](#)

04/04/2006 © Palm Beach Post

Teenagers with learner's permits to drive would not be allowed to talk on cellphones while behind the wheel under a bill approved Monday by a Senate committee.

[Police Going Under Cover In Construction Zones](#)

04/04/2006 © Palm Beach Gardens-WPBF (ABC)

Police are going under cover to make sure motorists slow down in construction zones. Operation Hardhat started Monday as part of National Work Zone Awareness Week. During the week, Florida Highway Patrol Troopers are trading in their bulletproof vests for construction vests in an effort to keep real construction workers safe on the job.

[Building boom chases Boynton Beach cows from pastures, portends traffic jams](#)

04/04/2006 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel

The cows are gone, replaced by giant earth-moving equipment on the last remaining pastures along a busy stretch of Congress Avenue. Some neighbors say they will miss the rustic serenity of the animals grazing, but they are more concerned about the future and the thousands of cars that will come with the large residential and shopping projects under construction just north of Old Boynton Road. The projects will add more than 2,700 residential units along Congress between Old Boynton Road and Gateway Boulevard.

[St. Joe has big plans for south side](#)

04/04/2006 © Tallahassee Democrat

The St. Joe Co., developer of SouthWood, is on the move again in Tallahassee. St. Joe is proposing to develop 1 million square feet of commercial space along with 2,800 homes, three hotels and a 110-bed hospital on Tallahassee's south side. That's in addition to 4,700 homes being built just to the east in SouthWood.

MONDAY, 4/3/06

[Transportation](#)

04/03/2006 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel

ISSUE: A new era for Tri-Rail begins as double tracking nears its end. Tri-Rail reached a milestone with the near-completion of its double tracking project, which is essential if the South Florida commuter rail service ever hopes to be worthy of the name "mass transit."

[Airline delays and complaints on the upswing, report says](#)

04/03/2006 © Daytona Beach News-Journal

"They're less on time, they're losing bags at a rate they've never done before and people are complaining again," said Dean Hedley, co-author of the study being released Monday. Passenger complaints increased 17 percent last year over 2004 and the rate of mishandled baggage jumped from 4.83 per 1,000 passengers to 6.06 in 2005. Customer satisfaction last year was the lowest since 2000.

[Regional road map](#)

04/03/2006 © Florida Today

It happened in Atlanta, Phoenix and South Florida. Guess what, folks? It's starting to happen in Central Florida, too. We're talking about cities and regions that began as clusters of isolated or compact communities and metastasized due to ugly sprawl. The writing is on the wall for the same thing to happen to the seven-county Central Florida region that includes Brevard County.

[It's naïve to believe `regional' talk in politics](#)

04/03/2006 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel

It's a mystery why otherwise smart people continue to believe that our county will be treated fairly by regional partnerships in a Miami-Dade/Broward/Palm Beach trifecta. If anyone wants to observe a classic drama of political sharpies maneuvering for advantage, this is it -- with Palm Beach County being the target. Regionalism only works when a true partnership is in play.

[Sheridan Tri-Rail village stirs alarm with nearby residents concerned about traffic](#)

04/03/2006 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel

City commissioners are about to take a second look at plans to turn the area around the Sheridan Tri-Rail station into an urban village with tall buildings, a hotel and lots of retail and office space. The Sheridan Stationside Village, first conceived as 248 low-cost apartments with office space and a charter school, has morphed substantially since it was unveiled in 2003.

[Tunnel job lures foreign firms](#)

04/03/2006 © Miami Herald

Crunch time is fast approaching for the Port of Miami-Dade tunnel, the \$1.3 billion transportation project that nearly everyone seems to want as long as somebody else finds a way to pay for it.

[Safety in work zone is the goal](#)

04/03/2006 © Ft. Myers News-Press

Southwest Florida roads can seem like obstacle courses, with all the construction work under way. Construction is frustrating for drivers and very dangerous for all concerned workers, drivers, passengers and pedestrians. This week the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will mark National Work Zone Awareness week, continuing its year-long campaign, "Work Zone Safety.

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