



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week: "A government which robs Peter to pay Paul can always depend on the support of Paul." -George Bernard Shaw

MONDAY, 4/11/05

[Time for leadership](#)

(04/11/2005 © Florida Today)

Schools packed to the rafters, traffic that barely moves, public services that can't keep up, destruction of the environment and a desperate search for money to meet the needs. That's the price Floridians are paying for unregulated growth that benefits only developers. And that's why we're behind Gov. Jeb Bush's plan to toughen current lax growth-management laws.

[Growth Plan Still Lacks Funding](#)

(04/11/2005 © Lakeland Ledger)

TALLAHASSEE -- The fate of a growth management bill in the 2005 Legislature may become clearer this week as lawmakers learn how much new money they will have and a Senate committee unveils its version of a bill to improve the state's planning process.

[Transit seeks lane change for buses in traffic](#)

(04/11/2005 © Miami Herald)

In its never-ending -- some might say quixotic -- quest to convince more of us to get out of our cars and onto its buses and trains, Miami-Dade Transit is pushing the Florida Legislature for special permission to use the breakdown lanes when traffic is moving at a snail's pace on limited-access expressways.

[Mass transit plan may take detour](#)

(04/11/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

It's an ambitious plan that could eventually enable a person to travel from Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport to the Office Depot Center in Sunrise -- maybe by bus, maybe by train. But a political movement is afoot to derail that plan, or perhaps shift its gears.

[Prepaid cards simplify private jet service](#)

(04/11/2005 © Miami Herald)

Some large companies on the go still buy corporate jets, commonly through fractional ownership interests. But now the ultimate business travel perk is widely purchased by the hour with prepaid cards popularly known as "jet cards," similar in function to cards issued for other prepaid services like long-distance phone calls.

TUESDAY, 4/12/05

[Analysts boost tax collection forecast by \\$2 billion](#)

(04/12/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. - Florida's booming housing market will help boost the state's revenues by an unprecedented \$2 billion over the next 15 months, economists said Monday. "It's unreal," House Speaker Allan Bense said after getting the news.

[Senate looks to tax drivers and aid builders](#)

(04/12/2005 © Miami Herald)

TALLAHASSEE - The state Senate will release a partial answer today on how to raise new money to pay for growth in Florida: Make it easier for county officials to raise local sales and gasoline taxes by eliminating the need for voter approval.

[Seat belt safety bill has a good chance to pass](#)

(04/12/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

TALLAHASSEE -- What a difference a year makes. For the first time in his legislative career, and thanks to one Jacksonville state senator, Rep. Irv Slosberg's chances at passing the safety-belt bill he has championed since the death of his daughter in a car accident are looking good.

[Connector will relieve local traffic](#)

(04/12/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

Construction of the Wonderwood Connector in Jacksonville reaches another milestone today when the four-lane road opens to traffic between Monument and Girvin roads. The 2.25-mile stretch of road will have all four lanes open after the morning rush hour, according to the Jacksonville Transportation Authority.

[Broward airport delays top nation](#)

(04/12/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport was so overwhelmed by the number of planes flying in and out this winter that it had almost as many delays unrelated to the weather as the nation's two busiest airports combined -- Chicago's O'Hare and Atlanta's Hartsfield.

[Is Crosstown the end?](#)

(04/12/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

TAMPA - Motorists using the Lee Roy Selmon Crosstown Expressway will pay higher tolls 30 months earlier than planned in order to finance borrowing needed to finish the elevated-road project. The news was a grim way for the Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority to approach Wednesday's first anniversary of the collapse of a section of the Crosstown's new bridge.

[Selmon Toll Increase Accelerates](#)

(04/12/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

TAMPA - Lee Roy Selmon Expressway tolls will increase in 2007 - 2 1/2 years earlier than scheduled - to pay for \$99 million in repairs to the elevated lanes being built in the highway's median. Expressway officials were quick to blame the increase on URS

Corp., chief engineering consultant and designer of the support pier that sank and caused a section of the road to collapse.

WEDNESDAY, 4/13/05

[Bennett touts tax power for counties](#)

(04/13/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

TALLAHASSEE - County commissioners would find it easier to levy existing local-option sales taxes to pay for schools, transportation and water under the growth management plan passed Tuesday by Sen. Mike Bennett's Community Affairs Committee. But Bennett said the bill will go nowhere this session without the Senate, the House and the governor agreeing on a sustainable state funding source to complement local efforts.

[Let growth, tourists pay for better roads -- survey](#)

(04/13/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Most Central Floridians agree that the area's roads need to be made safer, but few have much enthusiasm for paying the tab, according to a new survey being presented today. Instead, they think tourists and new homeowners should pay for the road improvements through higher rental car taxes or impact fees, according to the survey conducted for MetroPlan Orlando, the transportation planning agency for Orange, Osceola and Seminole counties.

[Senate: Growth, tax hike do mix](#)

(04/13/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

TALLAHASSEE - The Florida Senate has a plan to pay for Florida's future growth: Raise your local taxes. Senate leaders, who unveiled their growth management plan Tuesday, want to give county commissions the authority, with a simple majority vote, to raise sales and gas taxes.

[Spending \\$2.2-billion: Growth? Tax cuts?](#)

(04/13/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

TALLAHASSEE - Florida taxpayers have handed a big fat check to the Legislature, and now lawmakers have to decide what to do with it.

[Florida Faces Milestone Moment In Managing Growth](#)

(04/13/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

It's heartening to hear that both Gov. Jeb Bush and Senate President Tom Lee are resolved to confront the state's growth crisis during this legislative session. And it's refreshing to see they have the guts to acknowledge what most politicians won't: Clearing up the backlog of needed roads, schools and water services will require modest tax increases.

[Cost keeping guardrails off I-95](#)

(04/13/2005 © Florida Today)

State officials have said they will install guardrails along Interstate 95 in Brevard County by 2010, but why can't they do it now? The question comes up after every crossover fatality, especially after Monday's in which four people died and three were injured. Officials say the answer is money.

[Property taxes could fund Lee roadwork](#)

(04/13/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Officials said they'll look into using a new source of revenue property taxes to build roads in southeastern Lee County, but raising taxes isn't part of the plan.

THURSDAY, 4/14/05

Stories about the Governor's Transportation Funding Plan for Growth Management:

[Voters might decide funding](#)

(04/14/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

TALLAHASSEE - Florida voters would be able to speak with their ballots on the issue of paying for growth management with a 10-year bond program offered Wednesday by Gov. Jeb Bush. A November referendum on the \$9.5 billion program, which includes \$1 billion in additional cash from this year's increased tax windfall, is Bush's proposal to fund growth at the state level.

[Counties may increase taxes to support local growth, under Gov. Bush plan](#)

(04/14/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

TALLAHASSEE -- Gov. Jeb Bush unveiled Wednesday Florida's most ambitious bid in 20 years to grab hold of runaway growth -- a \$9.5 billion plan to build new roads while also clearing the way for billions more in higher local taxes to pay for schools and other needs.

[Gov. Bush Proposes Growth Plan](#)

(04/14/2005 © Lakeland Ledger)

TALLAHASSEE -- Gov. Jeb Bush proposed Wednesday spending nearly \$15 billion -- a combination of state and local tax revenue and state bonds -- to pay for the infrastructure needed to support the state's growing population through 2017. Bush suggested spending \$1 billion this year on roads and public transportation.

[Bush: Spend \\$9.5B on roads](#)

(04/14/2005 © Florida Today)

TALLAHASSEE - Gov. Jeb Bush on Wednesday proposed beefing up transportation spending by \$9.5 billion during the next decade to pave the way for passage of his sweeping growth management reform. Bush's proposal depends in part on voter approval in November to sell bonds to raise the money.

[Governor Proposes Billions For Roads](#)

(04/14/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

TALLAHASSEE - Gov. Jeb Bush on Wednesday proposed spending nearly \$10 billion on transportation improvements during the next 10 years, while calling on local governments to pony up another \$5.3 billion to solve school and water issues as the state's population continues to surge. The governor's growth management plan calls for spending \$1 billion in new cash this year on roads.

[Florida's windfall](#)

(04/14/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

Florida, which taxes and spends at one of the lowest rates in the nation, has just been handed \$2.2-billion to disburse any way it wants. But lawmakers, having become so accustomed to shortchanging schools and roads and nursing homes, seem entirely too eager to leave bad enough alone.

[Cost to fix road budget: \\$760 million](#)

(04/14/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

The search is on for almost \$760 million Jacksonville officials now say it will take to deal with shortfalls, and some additions, in the Better Jacksonville Plan's road and overpass projects. It's the first time Mayor John Peyton's staff has publicly tallied how much it would need to fix most of the city's current transportation troubles.

[ROADS: Obtaining fair funding](#)

(04/14/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

Many of Jacksonville's busiest roads are state roads. These roads are currently being improved with funding in part from Jacksonville taxpayers through the Better Jacksonville Plan. In fact, Jacksonville taxpayers are funding \$555.8 million in improvements on state roads, according to the Mayor's Office in a press release.

[Elevated lane for mass transit part of options offered to unclog I-595](#)

(04/14/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

For residents who live along Interstate 595, getting to work in 20 years might mean walking across an air-conditioned bridge over the highway to a sleek bus or train running in the median. Drivers could buy their way out of congestion by paying a toll to use a system of elevated express lanes built on top of the transit line.

[Power shift sought for expressway authority](#)

(04/14/2005 © Miami Herald)

Incensed by several moves that will dig deeper into the pockets of their suburban constituents, five Republican state representatives from West Miami-Dade are pushing legislation that would dramatically shift the balance of power at the local expressway authority.

[Estates residents review plans for new road network](#)

(04/14/2005 © Naples Daily News)

NIMBY sentiment was out in full force at a public meeting Wednesday night in which residents perused a potential new road network for Golden Gate Estates and North Belle Meade. "Not In My Back Yard," declared residents who live on side streets that feed into 16th Avenue Southwest in expressing their outrage about a proposal to extend the avenue from Collier Boulevard to Everglades Boulevard.

FRIDAY, 4/15/05

[Getting bigger by the moment](#)

(04/15/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

Florida's powerful growth engine kicked into overdrive last year as the state's population increased an average of nearly 1,100 people per day. Its population is nearing 17.4

million, up almost 400,000 people from 2003 to 2004, according to federal census estimates released Thursday. That's the equivalent of adding more people than live in the city of Tampa.

[Florida has nation's fastest growing county](#)

(04/15/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

The U.S. Census Bureau announced this morning what the Sunshine State has been saying all along: Florida is the place to be. And Flagler County, by percentage growth from 2003 to 2004, was the nation's fastest-growing county with St. Johns not far behind at No. 9.

[GROWTH: No easy way out](#)

(04/15/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

The timing couldn't be better for \$2.2 billion in unexpected state revenues to drop into Florida's lap. Not only does the windfall from Florida's booming real estate and hurricane recovery efforts give Florida more budgetary wiggle room, but it also boosts Gov. Jeb Bush's bid for stronger growth management measures.

[No compromise](#)

(04/15/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

If history is any indication, state lawmakers will be unable to resist tinkering with Gov. Jeb Bush's thoughtful and groundbreaking proposal to better manage growth in Florida. Any changes, though, should be minor in nature and limited in number.

[Keep highway funds at home with local -- not federal --gas taxes](#)

(04/15/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

Article published Apr 15, 2005 Keep highway funds at home with local -- not federal -- gas taxes It shouldn't be surprising that part of the cause of our shortfall in road-building money flows directly through the political corridors of Washington, D.C.

[Move it, slowpokes](#)

(04/15/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

The name does not do justice to the legislation; in fact, it is a misrepresentation of its essential purpose. We refer to the Road Rage Reduction Act, which has been passed in slightly different forms by both houses of the Legislature and awaits reconciliation in conference committee. The bill, sponsored by Sen. Mike Bennett, R-Bradenton, would make it illegal for motorists to drive in the left lane of high-speed freeways unless passing other cars.

[Planners in Broward prefer use of light rail](#)

(04/15/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Broward planners chose light rail over buses Thursday to serve a \$1 billion east-west mass transit line, opting for a pricier but more appealing system they hope will draw more commuters and help ease traffic. The Metropolitan Planning Organization also voted to direct the state to build as much of the system as possible in an exclusive path that doesn't interfere with drivers.