



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week: "Democracy must be something more than two wolves and a sheep voting on what to have for dinner." - *James Bovard*

MONDAY, 4/18/05

[Rules, not just money](#)

(04/18/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

For two decades, the state has demanded that cities and counties be prepared for growth before it happens. Now, Gov. Bush has taken a reasonable first step toward deciding how to pay for it. The state would borrow \$8.5 billion over 10 years and put up \$1 billion now out of a \$2.2 billion revenue windfall to help finance roads, water systems, parks and other needs created by rapid growth.

[Windfall Presents Pleasant Dilemma](#)

(04/18/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

TALLAHASSEE - It was even better than discovering some spare change in the couch cushions. For state budget writers, last week's windfall was more like finding a \$100 bill in that old jacket pocket. This week, lawmakers will begin negotiating how to spend an extra \$2.2 billion that is pouring into state coffers.

[Spend, borrow and bolt](#)

(04/18/2005 © Gainesville Sun)

Let's see if I've got this straight: Gov. Jeb "No New Taxes" Bush has figured out that Florida can't manage its runaway growth without ... well, new taxes. And so Jeb, who once said that taxes should never be raised without voter approval, wants county commissioners to raise taxes without voter approval to pay for about \$5.3 billion worth of local growth-related infrastructure improvements.

[Governor and Legislature tackling the challenge of Florida's growth](#)

(04/18/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

Florida continues to swell with people. While the state averaged 300,000 new people a year in the 1990s, it jumped to nearly 400,000 people last year, continuing an upward trend since the turn of the century. This creates great consternation for some people. But the causes for the growth are pretty obvious -- and very encouraging.

[Hidden Cost Of Fast Growth Is Exposed By Rising Tolls](#)

(04/18/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

The need for costly repairs on the expressway addition between Tampa and Brandon soon will cost commuters more in tolls. With the construction company not accepting blame and the results of mediation uncertain, the Tampa-Hillsborough County

Expressway Authority had no choice but to keep the project on solid ground, financially as well as structurally.

[Mayor says road budget can be salvaged 'holistically'](#)

(04/18/2005 © Jacksonville Business Journal)

JACKSONVILLE-- Mayor John Peyton and his top aides have been touting a "holistic approach" to solve the Better Jacksonville Plan roads budget overage of between \$725 million and \$760 million.

[Beach trolley on a roll](#)

(04/18/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Improved trolley service to Fort Myers Beach featuring more vehicles, more pickups and more storage space attracted thousands of new riders this year. LeeTran's free park-and-ride trolleys more than doubled their riders in March 2005 compared to the same month a year ago. There were 94,480 riders last month, compared with 45,284 in March 2004.

TUESDAY, 4/19/05

[Growth plan moves ahead](#)

(04/19/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

TALLAHASSEE - Sen. Mike Bennett's growth management reform plan passed its next-to-last committee stop Monday, receiving a unanimous vote in the Senate Transportation Committee. The bill will be heard next in the Ways & Means Committee on its way to the Senate floor, but negotiations with the House leave the bill's final contents up to speculation.

[Growth plans rushing through](#)

(04/19/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat)

Gov. Jeb Bush's proposals to link new growth to the availability of schools, roads and water supplies were moving quickly through the House and Senate on Monday, less than a week after they were introduced. Bush last week proposed spending \$9.5 billion in the next decade on growth. He wants to require that roads, schools and water be available to serve new development.

[Fight Brewing Over Growth Bill](#)

(04/19/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

TALLAHASSEE - The chairman of the House Growth Management Committee dug in his heels Monday in opposition to new taxes for infrastructure, setting up a potential showdown over the high-profile, high-dollar issue with the Senate and Gov. Jeb Bush.

[2 Blown Fuses Snarled Airport Radio Contact](#)

(04/19/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

TAMPA - A pair of blown \$5 fuses apparently caused the air traffic control tower at Tampa International Airport to lose the ability to talk to aircraft for about 20 minutes Saturday.

[Road project losing backers](#)

(04/19/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

The sticker shock of ever-rising prices for Better Jacksonville Plan overpasses has some City Council members saying they can't justify building all of them. Estimated costs have doubled or even tripled since 2000, according to the latest internal Jacksonville Transportation Authority estimates.

[Lee eyes option for roads near airport, FGCU](#)

(04/19/2005 © Naples Daily News)

Lee County could end up spending property taxes to build roads for only the second time if fellow commissioners agree to follow a track laid out by Commissioner John Albion. Albion is floating a proposal for the county to create a local district in southeast Lee County to capture property taxes for roadwork in that area.

[AirTran's arrival pays off at airport](#)

(04/19/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport saw its passenger count soar 19.2 percent during the first three months of the year, largely thanks to the introduction of discount carrier AirTran Airways.

WEDNESDAY, 4/20/05

[House to consider growth bill](#)

(04/20/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

TALLAHASSEE -- A House bill that would tie new growth to the availability of roads, schools and water would offer up to \$650 million in matching grants to help cities and counties catch up on a backlog of infrastructure projects. The plan takes a different approach to the same goal put forward by the governor and Senate.

[Spend it wisely](#)

(04/20/2005 © Florida Today)

In a state with so many needs from education to health care, finding an unexpected \$2.2 billion in the Florida budget understandably has plenty of legislators calling dibs on the dollars. The windfall, built on sales taxes from repairs following the state's four hurricanes last year, and on taxes on record home sales, could cover a lot of needs left unmet in the current legislative session.

[Taxes threaten growth plan](#)

(04/20/2005 © Florida Today)

TALLAHASSEE - House Republicans are drawing an anti-tax line in the sand on growth management proposals. The stance by House lawmakers drafting the legislation is at odds with Senate leaders and Gov. Jeb Bush, who have both signaled a willingness to lift the referendum requirement for raising some local sales and gas taxes to pay for Florida's population gains.

[Bush growth plan faces tax battle](#)

(04/20/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Gov. Jeb Bush's big plan to rein in the state's out-of-control growth could hinge on whether Central Florida's leaders have the political will to impose nearly \$1 billion in new local taxes.

[Money for growth blocks budget discussions](#)

(04/20/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

TALLAHASSEE — Six years into all-Republican, anti-tax, statehouse control, the resolution of this year's legislative session could rest on one Republican's insistence that Florida identify a tax source to pay for billions of dollars of roads and schools.

[Panel to seek more money for highway bill](#)

(04/20/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat)

WASHINGTON - The chairman of the Senate Finance Committee and his Democratic counterpart said Tuesday that they are dissatisfied with the spending level of a White House-backed highway bill and will try to boost funding when the bill reaches the Senate floor.

[Find better transit fee](#)

(04/20/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

A different kind of public transit service is approaching with Tri-Rail's double-tracking and every-20-minute trains. It will require a new way of financing the South Florida Regional Transit Authority, which operates transit in Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties.

THURSDAY, 4/21/05

['Pay as you grow' seeks Duval's help](#)

(04/21/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

Gov. Jeb Bush dispatched three of the state's top administrators to Jacksonville Wednesday for a panel discussion aimed at generating support for a statewide plan that would tighten growth management regulations and pump up transportation spending by billions of dollars.

[Bennett's growth plan draws dissent](#)

(04/21/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

TALLAHASSEE - To get a good look at the growth management battle brewing over the final two weeks of the legislative session, look no further than the Manatee delegation.

[U.S. Census Bureau says state will become third largest by 2011](#)

(04/21/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

The Sunshine State long has been much more than just a holiday destination - people often end up staying for good. But according to new nationwide population projections, the love of sand, sun and Mickey Mouse is perhaps even bigger than some realized. Just consider the growth in numbers. Florida will absorb another 12.7 million new residents by 2030, more than any other state in the union.

[Report: Private Screeners Do a Better Job](#)

(04/21/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

WASHINGTON -- A congressional investigation found airport screeners employed by private companies do a better job detecting dangerous objects than government screeners, according to a House member who has seen the classified report.

[Under-18 drivers better buckle up](#)

(04/21/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

TALLAHASSEE Motorists under 18 would have to buckle their seat belts or risk being ticketed under compromise legislation that passed a major milestone Wednesday in the Florida Senate. The measure, sponsored by Sen. Tony Hill, D-Jacksonville, won support and even praise from a few senators who have long stood in the way of toughening Florida's seat belt law.

[Trolley success inspiring](#)

(04/21/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

The trolley to Fort Myers Beach is a striking success, and it shows some of the ways to make public transit attractive in car-dominated Southwest Florida.

[Port hopes for I-75 connection](#)

(04/21/2005 © Sarasota Herald-Tribune)

PORT MANATEE -- The Department of Transportation is looking into whether Port Manatee will require a direct connection to Interstate 75 in coming decades.

FRIDAY, 4/22/05

[House and Senate reach deal on tax cuts, spending for growth](#)

(04/22/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

TALLAHASSEE -- Floridians would get more than \$200 million in tax cuts and \$1.5 billion to pay for roads and schools and other community needs to support the state's growing population under a deal House and Senate leaders announced Thursday. The agreement clears the way for committees from both chambers to begin deciding the details of the budget.

[Growth needs are priority](#)

(04/22/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

TALLAHASSEE - Florida residents fed up with gridlock and crowded schools were the biggest winners Thursday in a legislative spending plan that puts a priority on managing the state's rapid growth. The spending deal assures a construction boom in roads, schools and water projects for years to come.

[Budget compromise finally under way](#)

(04/22/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

TALLAHASSEE — House and Senate members began work toward a compromise budget for the 2005-06 year Thursday, following the unveiling of a deal that sets aside \$1.5 billion next year for Senate President Tom Lee's growth management proposal.

[Agency heads agree: Money sets Bush growth plan apart](#)

(04/22/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

PENSACOLA, Fla. - The heads of Florida's environmental and community affairs agencies answered in unison Thursday when asked to explain what set Gov. Jeb Bush's new "pay as you grow" proposal apart from past growth management reform efforts. "The money," they said.

[Contract let to replace Ivan-damaged bridge in Panhandle](#)

(04/22/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

PENSACOLA, Fla. - A \$242 million contract has been awarded to replace an Interstate 10 bridge across Escambia Bay that was severely damaged by Hurricane Ivan in September. Tidewater Skanska Inc. of Virginia Beach, Va., signed the contract for the twin-span bridge Wednesday with the Florida Department of Transportation.

[City officials cool to Bush growth plan](#)

(04/22/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

TALLAHASSEE -- As lawmakers try to hash out a deal, Jacksonville officials are finding a key portion of Gov. Jeb Bush's plan for growth management too much to shoulder. Bush is asking legislators to approve new development standards and spending \$9.5 billion to help solve the state's bulging growth needs.

[House Committee OKs Growth Plan](#)

(04/22/2005 © Tampa Tribune)

TALLAHASSEE - A comprehensive new plan to control growth and development in the state cleared a key committee Thursday. The House's infrastructure committee unanimously approved the growth-management legislation after praise from a wide array of groups but without a key provision included in the Senate's bill that would pressure local governments to increase taxes to pay for roads.

[Legislators may levy \\$100 mass-transit fee on new car sales in S. Florida](#)

(04/22/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

TALLAHASSEE Legislators are considering whether to sock South Florida car buyers with an extra \$100 charge when they purchase new vehicles. The money would go to the Regional Transportation Authority, the parent of Tri-Rail, which has visions of vastly increased mass transit efforts to help alleviate congestion in Broward, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties.