



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

MONDAY, 7/5/04

Battle Rages Over States Highway Funding

(07/02/2004 © Tallahassee Democrat)

WASHINGTON - The question of which states pay the most in gasoline taxes and which get the most money back is rekindling a perennial battle as Congress and the White House scuffle over a huge spending bill to finance highway and mass transit programs.

New I-4 bridge cuts commute time

(07/05/2004 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

ORANGE CITY -- A new bridge spanning the St. Johns River and a wider highway have West Volusia commuters smiling at last. Years of traffic snarls, missed appointments and swearing have declined a month after the third eastbound Interstate 4 lane opened across the bridge. A third westbound lane opened in March.

Railroad industry has a lot of steam

(07/05/2004 © Florida Today)

Reports of the demise of the railroad-freight industry appear to be premature. In fact, U.S. railroads said they expect to hire 80,000 workers before the end of the decade. Although total track-miles fell from 319,000 in 1970 to 170,000 last year, that decline has not led to a corresponding swoon in rail transit. In fact, companies are increasingly turning to railroads to move material.

Life in the fast lane may come to pass

(07/05/2004 © Miami Herald)

Applying supply-and-demand concepts straight out of Economics 101, local road builders are promoting a novel idea to drastically change the face of rush-hour commuting in Miami-Dade by 2012: pay more to drive in a fast lane with less traffic. "We're talking about congestion insurance," said Robert W. Poole Jr., director of transportation studies for the Reason Public Policy Institute.

Brevard County port considered the state's safest

(07/05/2004 © Orlando Business Journal)

PORT CANAVERAL -- The world's second-busiest cruise line port had no problems meeting tougher new security standards which went into effect July 1. Port Canaveral in Brevard County is considered the state's safest port by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. Because of its volume and nature of cargo, the port has enjoyed high visibility from state and federal authorities.

[Airports may move to private screeners](#)

(07/05/2004 © Orlando Sentinel)

WASHINGTON -- Airports soon will be allowed to use private contractors to check passengers and baggage for weapons and explosives -- a move that has opened a fault line in a nation where memories of the Sept. 11 attacks are still raw.

[Hot-pink signs to hit highways](#)

(07/05/2004 © Palm Beach Post)

It's a pink so vivid that it could stop traffic. And it will. Starting in about two months on Florida roadways and soon after in the rest of the nation, hot-pink signs will indicate a "traffic incident," an accident or other temporary roadway emergency ahead.

TUESDAY, 7/6/04

[Officials planning SunPass-only express lanes on 3 Turnpike plazas](#)

(07/06/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

With more than half of all drivers paying tolls electronically on Florida's Turnpike, officials are forging ahead with plans to build "open tolling" express lanes at three mainline toll plazas in South Florida. In five years, the turnpike will convert SunPass-only lanes at the Cypress Creek, Lantana and Okeechobee plazas by removing the tollbooths and narrow lanes for SunPass drivers.

[Rise in traffic fines described as user fee](#)

(07/05/2004 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

Getting pulled over for a broken headlight or lead-foot driving will cost more. In an effort to fund a voter-mandated shift in court costs from the county to the state, the Legislature hiked the fines motorists pay for traffic infractions.

[SunPassvisions smaller toll cards](#)

(07/06/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

As technology improves it tends to get smaller and cheaper, and SunPass is no different. Florida's Turnpike is developing a new electronic toll-paying device the size of a credit card as a less expensive alternative to the \$25 SunPass transponders drivers must now purchase. The new gadgets would cost as little as \$3 and would be widely available.

[DOT Workshop On U.S. 98 Set](#)

(07/06/2004 © Lakeland Ledger)

DOT Workshop On U.S. 98 Set The Florida Department of Transportation will have a public information workshop Thursday on alternatives to the future six-laning of U.S. 98 South from State Road 60 to Winter Lake Road.

[Former director says airport has short life span](#)

(07/06/2004 © Miami Herald)

Few who attended the Jan. 26, 1993, Dade County Commission meeting will ever forget the moment Steve Clark ended Rick Elder's tenure as the county's aviation director. The commission had just voted 6-1 to spend \$500 million on a new terminal for American

Airlines -- a plan Elder adamantly opposed. After getting the project approved, American wasn't finished.

Building a road that spares the river

(07/06/2004 © Miami Herald)

Build a road in Florida, and they will come -- by the thousands, bringing strip malls, subdivisions and other symbols of sprawl. A bill signed by Gov. Jeb Bush last week might change that equation for future road projects.

Lee hit with higher than expected road costs

(07/06/2004 © Naples Daily News)

They knew the job was going to be expensive when they put it out for bid, but Lee County officials didn't know just how expensive widening Summerlin Road would be until the bids came in. And while it will be several months before another big project is bid, higher materials costs and skyrocketing land values may spell big cost hikes for other road projects.

WEDNESDAY, 7/7/04

Officials to install permanent terminal barriers at Fort Lauderdale airport

(07/07/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport will install permanent barricades outside its terminals to prevent a repeat of this weekend, when a man crashed his sport utility vehicle through a building entrance and into a ticket counter, county officials said on Tuesday.

Final I-95 ramp to PBI opening

(07/07/2004 © Ft. Pierce Tribune)

WEST PALM BEACH - If all goes as planned, Treasure Coast travelers to Palm Beach International Airport will have a quicker drive to the terminal this morning.

95 loss of American Airlines hub gave RDU chance to re-invent

(07/07/2004 © Miami Herald)

MORRISVILLE, N.C. - When American Airlines closed its hub at Raleigh-Durham International Airport in 1995, it seemed a blow from which the airport might never recover. The Dallas-based carrier was by far the airport's biggest tenant, at one point flying 73 percent of its passengers and offering about 200 daily departures.

Coming to a highway near you: Lexus lanes

(07/07/2004 © Miami Herald)

Anyone who has missed an important appointment or been late to work because they were stuck in traffic can appreciate the good sense behind a proposal for drive-fast lanes. Drive-fast lanes offer drivers an option to pay more for access to fast lanes with less traffic. Florida's Turnpike and Miami-Dade Expressway Authority are pushing the idea as a means of "managing" rush-hour traffic.

CAT bus services arrives on Marco Island

(07/07/2004 © Naples Daily News)

It's been a long time coming. It could be a long time gone. The long-awaited arrival of public bus service to Marco Island began Monday. If rider numbers don't pick up from Monday and Tuesday counts, the service could be stopped, county transportation officials said Tuesday.

Commuting Sinks

(07/07/2004 © Tampa Tribune)

TAMPA - It started with a slight tremble, quickly sent a major tremor through workday commutes and undermined some motorists' confidence in the high-tech highway being erected in the median of the Lee Roy Selmon Expressway. A concrete pier sank 20 feet just west of 50th Street about 7 a.m. Tuesday, bringing down the two spans of the new elevated road deck it was supporting along with it.

Shortage Of Material Delays Road-Widening Job

(07/07/2004 © Tampa Tribune)

SPRING HILL - The widening of a segment of Mariner Boulevard was supposed to begin last month. A nationwide shortage of building materials, mostly concrete and steel, has delayed the project. Now county officials hope the project will get under way a week from today.

Imagine Light Rail In Tampa

(07/07/2004 © Tampa Tribune)

Recently my wife and I experienced the light rail system in Portland, Ore. It proved to be a wonderful experience. From airport to downtown in comfort in about 30 minutes. Cost: less than \$1.50 each. The trip made me wonder about Tampa.

THURSDAY, 7/8/04

Screening for airport workers to be tightened

(07/08/2004 © Bradenton Herald)

WASHINGTON - Tens of thousands of employees at airport restaurants, newsstands and other shops behind security checkpoints will soon have to undergo more detailed background checks and pass through metal detectors on their way to work.

Security checks faster for some air travelers

(07/08/2004 © Bradenton Herald)

MINNEAPOLIS - Select airline passengers breezed through security Wednesday at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport in the start of an experiment to ease delays and make flying a little more agreeable. Under the program, frequent business fliers will not be subject to random searches if they pass background checks in advance and do not set off any alarms while moving through security.

Road builder barred from business with state

(07/08/2004 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

TALLAHASSEE -- White Construction, once one of the state's biggest road builders,

has pleaded guilty to grand theft and has been barred from doing business with the Florida Department of Transportation for 30 years, Attorney General Charlie Crist said Wednesday.

Extension of Dolphin Expressway to be SunPass only

(07/08/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

The Miami-Dade Expressway Authority is making a statement with its first major expansion in 12 years -- a new kind of toll plaza that lets those with SunPass cruise at highway speeds while forcing cash-paying drivers to leave the highway to a set of tollbooths beside the main road.

Rinker plans to move plant to St. Augustine Road near I-95

(07/08/2004 © Jacksonville - Florida Times Union)

Rinker Materials of Florida Inc. intends to relocate its concrete block manufacturing plant from Talleyrand near downtown to St. Augustine Road near Interstate 95. "The new plant will have better access to the South Jacksonville and North St. Augustine markets," said Rinker engineering manager Donald Beers.

PBIA launches security expansion to cut waits

(07/08/2004 © Ft. Pierce Tribune)

Facing record traffic, Palm Beach International Airport has launched a \$21 million security checkpoint expansion so travelers won't spend more than 15 minutes in line - even on busy holidays.

FDOT Sex Scandal Results in Lower Polo Park Speed Limit

(07/08/2004 © Lakeland Ledger)

A scandal in the District 1 office of the Florida Department of Transportation may turn out to work in favor of Polo Park residents who have been battling the department over making the neighborhood's entry to U.S. 27 safer.

2 Rail Systems Must Connect, Sebesta Says

(07/08/2004 © Tampa Tribune)

PINELLAS PARK - Proposed rail systems in Pinellas and Hillsborough counties share a notable flaw as vast as the Bay that divides them. As drawn, the systems don't connect. That's not nearly as significant as the reality that neither plan is funded, but it's a gap one Bay area legislator is trying to bridge.

FRIDAY, 7/9/04

Curves could add acres for industry

(07/09/2004 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

EDGEWATER -- In the words of City Manager Ken Hooper, why would anyone want to make a perfectly straight road crooked? However, that's exactly what Edgewater is hoping to do with Air Park Road, which is too close to one of the Massey Air Park runways to allow industrial expansion at the private airport. Hooper said if the city is allowed to realign the roadway, it could create 50 additional acres of land that could be used for industrial purposes.

Bridge debris debate grows

(07/09/2004 © Jacksonville - Florida Times Union)

A federal grand jury has called witnesses for an investigation of the demolition of Jacksonville's old Fuller Warren Bridge. The news adds another layer to local debate over what to do with the remains of the old Interstate 95 bridge through downtown. Florida's Department of Transportation is seeking state and federal permits to resume demolition that halted two years ago.

Economist says rail costs \$100-billion

(07/09/2004 © St. Petersburg Times)

TALLAHASSEE - Building a high-speed train will probably cost Florida more than \$100-billion over three decades, an economist for opponents said Thursday. "I am concerned that Florida could be headed for the creation of your very own Amtrak," Brian Campbell told a state panel analyzing the costs of a proposed ballot measure to repeal the train.

FAMED RIDE FROM THE PAST MAY HAVE FUTURE IN MIAMI

(07/09/2004 © Miami Herald)

Everything old is new again: Miami leaders are accelerating plans for a sleek streetcar system that would bolster the development boom in neighborhoods north of downtown, running along some of the very same routes where clanging trolleys prospered 80 years ago. Transit planners are hoping to create a quick, safe, clean option for the tens of thousands of new residents who will be moving into high-rise condos between the Performing Arts Center and the Design District.

Sarasota commissioner against toll authority

(07/09/2004 © Naples Daily News)

The cure for Southwest Florida traffic problems is not to build new roads and widen existing ones, Sarasota County Commissioner Jon Thaxton told the Regional Planning Council Thursday. It's growth management. 'I think this is becoming precariously close to absolutely insane,' said Thaxton.

Bridge panel to apply for loan

(07/09/2004 © Northwest Florida Daily News)

The Emerald Coast Bridge Authority on Thursday agreed to apply for a \$1.5 million loan from the state Department of Transportation to continue engineering work on a proposed toll bridge.