



# NEWS CLIPS

***Your "Voice" for Transportation!***

Quote of the Week: "Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others." *Winston Churchill*

**MONDAY, 11/8/04**

## [Push Surcharge To Fund Transit](#)

(11/08/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel )

The county commissions of Miami-Dade, Broward and Palm Beach counties made a smart and courageous decision in agreeing to again seek approval from the state Legislature for an automobile license tag surcharge to help fund transportation projects. Now they must work together to gain support from South Florida legislators.

## [Response to governor has port project back on track](#)

(11/08/2004 © St. Petersburg Times )

With gasoline shortages around the state and Hurricane Ivan heading toward Tampa Bay, Gov. Jeb Bush came to Tampa's port on Sept. 8 to get a handle on possible bottlenecks in the supply chain. Ivan, of course, turned away and spared the bay area. But the governor's visit might have provided a boost to a pet project for the port.

## [New face recognition standards rekindle "big brother" charges](#)

(11/08/2004 © Boca Raton News )

A few months ago, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) announced that all airline passengers must remove coats, and could then be subjected to pat-down searches and checks for explosives – more invasive pat down searches, according to critics of the new program.

## [Researchers: Sprawl Related to Health Woes](#)

(11/08/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel )

DURHAM, N.C. -- North Carolina researchers are heading a national study to find the best ways to redesign communities so that Americans get out of their cars and travel by foot or bicycle. The \$2.8 million, five-year study involves Active Living by Design, headquartered in Chapel Hill, and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences in Research Triangle Park.

## [Quality of life slipping](#)

(11/08/2004 © Ft. Myers News-Press )

We talk a lot in Southwest Florida about quality of life. Usually, we're thinking about our sunshine, beaches and warm winter weather. However, levels of traffic congestion and highway safety also are important quality of life issues. In this area, we're losing ground, according to Self magazine's annual ranking of Healthiest Places for Women to Live.

### [U.S. 441 widening project set to begin in February](#)

(11/08/2004 © Orlando Sentinel )

A two-year project to widen four miles of U.S. Highway 441 from four to six lanes between Lake Eustis Drive and County Road 44B is scheduled to begin in February. The \$30.8 million construction plan includes adding turn lanes, medians, crossovers and sidewalks, replacing traffic signals at most intersections and installing utilities.

### [Miami-Dade aviation director resigns](#)

(11/08/2004 © St. Petersburg Times )

MIAMI - Miami-Dade Aviation Director Angela Gittens, an outsider hired after a string of embarrassing corruption probes, has resigned under pressure after supervising one of the nation's largest capital improvement projects.

**TUESDAY, 11/9/04**

### [Get unstuck](#)

(11/09/2004 © Orlando Sentinel )

Transportation hardly rated a mention in the recently concluded presidential sweepstakes. And a new federal-funding paradigm for transportation projects has languished in Congress for more than a year. But decision-makers shouldn't get the wrong idea. As the recent election revealed, gridlock still is very much on the minds of Americans -- in Florida, too.

### [`Issues' Man Appointed To Rescue Expressway](#)

(11/09/2004 © Tampa Tribune )

The local expressway authority has turned to a former high-speed rail official to get its elevated roadway project back on track. Board members voted unanimously Monday to appoint Ralph C. Mervine interim executive director of the Tampa-Hillsborough Expressway Authority. Mervine, 53, is a state transportation insider with a reputation as a troubleshooter.

### [Outgoing Miami-Dade aviation director to get \\$237,000 severance](#)

(11/09/2004 © Bradenton Herald )

MIAMI - The outgoing director of Miami International Airport will receive a lump sum payment of a year's salary and benefits totaling about \$237,000 after her resignation becomes effective Dec. 31. Angela Gittens, Miami-Dade County's aviation director, submitted her resignation under pressure from county officials Friday and plans to take administrative leave for the rest of the year.

### [Overpass project draws public flak](#)

(11/09/2004 © Florida Times-Union )

A crowd of about 300 people urged Jacksonville City Hall to kill plans for an overpass at Southside Boulevard and Baymeadows Road, calling it an unaffordable and ugly "monstrosity" that will spend money in the wrong place for traffic relief.

### [Central garage to ease airport rentals](#)

(11/09/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel )

For travelers renting cars in Fort Lauderdale, there is probably nothing more frustrating than forgetting where to return them. That should change in January when a \$247

million consolidated rental car center opens at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport, putting 10 rental car companies under one roof.

#### [Director of transit system selected](#)

(11/09/2004 © St. Petersburg Times )

TAMPA - The board of directors for Hillsborough County's transit agency will look to Delaware to replace its longtime executive director and restore confidence in the bus and streetcar system.

### **WEDNESDAY, 11/10/04**

#### [Study looks at beltway possibilities](#)

(11/10/2004 © Florida Times-Union )

A state feasibility study on a toll-funded "southern beltway" that would run through Clay and St. Johns counties to connect Interstates 95 and 10 should be completed in the spring, according to state officials.

#### [Guardrail will deter crossovers](#)

(11/10/2004 © Florida Today )

Question: What is the cost of the I-95 project and how will it be financed? Answer: Total estimated cost to widen the 33-mile-long, three-segment area from Malabar Road north to Citrus Boulevard is \$123.8 million.

#### [Alligator Alley rescue station in the works](#)

(11/10/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel )

For motorists who travel Alligator Alley, fire-rescue help soon will be closer. A Broward Sheriff's Office fire station is being built at an eastbound rest area between Mile Markers 34 and 35, about 10 miles west of the Broward toll plaza. "It will decrease the response time for a lot of accidents.

#### [Career day introduces high school kids to construction jobs](#)

(11/10/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel )

The Construction Career Days job fair was all about building for the future. During the three-day event held recently at the Bergeron Rodeo Grounds in Davie, educators and students learned about career opportunities while industry professionals scouted for future employees.

#### [Bridge work almost done](#)

(11/10/2004 © Jacksonville Daily Record )

Structural and facade improvements on the Main Street Bridge are close to complete, according to the Florida Department of Transportation. The \$7.2 million upgrade should be finished by early December.

#### [Palm Beach County, towns fixing 166,000 storm-damaged signs](#)

(11/10/2004 © Jupiter Courier )

Hurricanes Frances and Jeanne downed 178,000 signs designating speed limits, intersection stops, street names, school zones and the like on public roads throughout Palm Beach County, and government agencies working to repair or replace them could seek well upward of \$880,000 in federal emergency funds to cover the costs.

### [Boston Highway Project Said Full of Leaks](#)

(11/10/2004 © Tallahassee Democrat )

BOSTON - The Big Dig highway project in downtown Boston is riddled with leaks dumping millions of gallons of water into the \$14.6 million tunnel system, according to an engineer hired to investigate the cause of a massive leak in September. Locating and fixing the hundreds of leaks could take up to 10 years, said Jack K. Lemley, a consultant hired by the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority.

**THURSDAY, 11/11/04**

### [Rail panel acts as if train is going ahead](#)

(11/11/2004 © Orlando Sentinel )

Voters may have kicked the bullet train out of Florida's constitution, but that hasn't stopped efforts to keep it going -- or to make radical changes in its plans. Meeting in Orlando on Tuesday, the Florida High Speed Rail Authority acted as if it still has a job to do -- plan a \$2.5 billion bullet-train system from Tampa to Orlando.

### [Fast Train's Wheels Still Rolling](#)

(11/11/2004 © Lakeland Ledger )

ORLANDO -- The Florida High Speed Rail Authority is alive and approving projects -- at least until the Legislature meets in March.

### [Bridge outlook hopeful](#)

(11/11/2004 © Pensacola News Journal )

Three lanes could open on the Interstate 10 bridge spanning Escambia Bay by Thanksgiving, and it is possible a new, six-lane bridge could open in two to three years, Florida Department of Transportation officials said Wednesday.

### [Fort Lauderdale airport installs breakable runway to slow out-of-control planes](#)

(11/11/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel )

It crumbles into bits in a clenched fist, yet has the strength to stop a 150-ton jumbo jet overshooting the end of a runway or aborting a takeoff. Two new beds of specially aerated, crushable concrete and foam blocks are the last lines of defense on the main runway at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport to prevent jets from careening into Interstate 95 or the Florida East Coast Railway tracks.

### [To road worriers: Mad mayor has sympathy to the max](#)

(11/11/2004 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel )

If you're sick of the road construction and traffic tie-ups in downtown West Palm Beach, Mayor Lois Frankel wants you to know she's on your side. She can't offer any actual relief, you understand. But she does send her sympathies. Her vehicle, you might say, is the electronic sign board.

### [Tentative map of California high speed rail route reviewed](#)

(11/11/2004 © Ocala Star Banner )

California High Speed Rail Authority officials unveiled a tentative map of routes for the proposed statewide bullet train - a plan that includes a 120-mile, nonstop stretch between Bakersfield and Fresno.

**FRIDAY, 11/12/04**

[Young drivers' seat belt habits still lax](#)

(11/12/2004 © Miami Herald )

Florida's record remains one of the worst in the country for young people killed in car crashes while not wearing seat belts, according to a national study. Although Florida's overall rate for highway deaths has dropped and seat belt usage is up, a critical statistic -- deaths of those younger than 25 -- remains high.

[Phoenix Light Rail Plan Wins Green Light](#)

(11/12/2004 © Tallahassee Democrat )

PHOENIX - Hoping to transform the city's reputation as business park by day and ghost town by night, voters have jumped aboard a sweeping, sales tax-funded transportation plan that includes a light rail system, beefed-up bus service and miles of new freeways.

[Thomas Drive project](#)

(11/12/2004 © Panama City News Herald )

The recent shift of traffic on Thomas Drive completed Phase One of the elevated roadway project, according to a Florida Department of Transportation press release. The shift allows for roadway improvements along Thomas Drive adjacent to the Naval Support Activity-Panama City. Crews are now in Phase Two of the project, which calls for continuing work on the approach ramps and support structures for the elevated section.

[Coalition tugs at strings and ribbons](#)

(11/12/2004 © South County Marion Citizen )

Those who attended Monday's Southwest S.R. 200 Coalition meeting became Strings and Ribbons Public Involvement guinea pigs for Greg Slay and the staff and consultants of Ocala/Marion County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO). After a brief explanation about the project, 42 members and guests were organized into five workshop groups to map out their wish lists of long-range transportation solutions.

[Expressway Authority Taps 'Take-Charge Guy' For Aid](#)

(11/12/2004 © Tampa Tribune )

TAMPA - When the southbound lanes of Interstate 75 were closed after a tanker truck crash and explosion destroyed the Salt Creek Bridge in 1996, the state turned to Ralph Mervine to restore traffic flow. "He is a take-charge guy who makes good decisions," said Ben Watts, who was Florida secretary of transportation then and put Mervine in charge.