



NEWS CLIPS

Your "Voice" for Transportation!

Quote of the Week:

"The happiest people don't necessarily have the best of everything. They just make the best of everything." - *Anonymous*

MONDAY, 11/14/05

[Wilma takes her toll on turnpike; \\$15.4 million lost when fares were suspended](#)

(11/14/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Like any business, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise counts on customers -- in this case drivers paying tolls -- to keep its coffers full. But that financial spigot is shut off when tolls are lifted to ease coastal evacuations during hurricanes. The turnpike lost an estimated \$15.4 million in revenue while tolls were suspended as Hurricane Wilma approached and in the days after the storm. Coupled with losses from hurricanes Dennis, Katrina and Rita earlier this year, the turnpike lost \$19.1 million.

Analysis: [Kaine Tackling Transportation Early On](#)

(Washington Post – 11/13/05)

Roads, Metrorail Extension Will Be the Focus of Governor-Elect's Town-Hall Tour

Just hours after Gov.-elect Timothy M. Kaine (D) won his race last week, he announced his support for adding a westbound lane to Interstate 66 inside the CapitalBeltway and extending Metrorail to Dulles Airport. But to address Virginia's transportation "crisis," as Kaine has termed it, the new governor will face much broader issues than whether to build one project or another.

[Transportation wish list gets look](#)

(11/14/2005 © Tallahassee Democrat)

This week, as city and county planners update transportation priorities for the next quarter century, residents of Leon, Gadsden and Wakulla counties will get to weigh in. Hanging in the balance: \$330 million in federal, state and local dollars to help the area better serve a population projected to grow from about 320,000 today to 437,000 by 2030.

[Air traffic shares shift](#)

(11/14/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Delta Air Lines' share of traffic at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport has declined to 16.5 percent in the first nine months of 2005. It was 18.8 percent in the same nine months of 2004. Other carriers showing big declines in that period include American Airlines, down to 9.3 percent from 12.1 percent.

[State No. 1 for bicycle deaths](#)

(11/14/2005 © Florida Today)

More bicyclists died in Florida than in any other state in 2004. According to a recently released report from the National Highway Transportation and Safety Administration, 122 bicyclists died in the state in crashes involving a vehicle. California came in second with 110 deaths. A total of 725 people died across the country in these kinds of crashes.

[Mailbag spotlight: On our roads](#)

(11/14/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

On your Nov. 8 front page, you talk about transportation plans for the next 30 years. Most of this involves widening current roads, advanced traveler information, upgraded traffic lights and bus lanes.

[FGCU license plate may become extinct](#)

(11/14/2005 © Naples Daily News)

It might be even harder to spy an eagle if Florida Gulf Coast University does not get 200 more registered license plates on the road by June 2006. FGCU had 803 registered license plates as of October 2005, according to the Florida Department of Transportation. The 9-year-old university needs at least 197 more plates in circulation by the end of June to keep them from becoming extinct.

TUESDAY, 11/15/05

[Senator from New Port Richey proposes pink DUI plates](#)

(11/15/2005 © Miami Herald)

CLEARWATER, Fla. - A Republican senator wants a law to require bright pink license plates on vehicles driven by people with restricted driving privileges due to convictions for driving under the influence. Sen. Mike Fasano, of New Port Richey, filed a bill earlier this month that requires the first three characters on the plate to read "DUI."

[Beltway opinions depend on home county, DOT finds](#)

(11/15/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

Hundreds of people squinted at maps, pored over traffic data and rendered different verdicts in Clay and St. Johns counties on the best place to build an outer beltway and new bridge across the St. Johns River. At meetings last week attended by about 600 people, the state Department of Transportation showed its newest proposed route.

[Public to see plans to widen interstate](#)

(11/15/2005 © Florida Today)

MIMS - Chris Michaud finds it hard enough to get onto Interstate 95, much less drive on it, when traffic's heavy. So the frequent I-95 traveler is glad to hear about continued progress on widening of the roadway -- especially in North Brevard, where he often gets on the interstate at State Road 46.

[Palm Coast hopes to aim lens at red light runners](#)

(11/15/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

PALM COAST -- City officials want the state Legislature to green-light a controversial proposal to install red-light cameras at busy traffic intersections. If the state OKs the bid,

red-light runners could find pricey traffic infractions in their mailboxes, even though no human officer actually witnessed the infraction.

[Tri-Rail moves for faster hurricane rebound](#)

(11/15/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

Thirteen days is too long for Tri-Rail to be out of service after a hurricane, its leaders said Monday, agreeing to develop a plan for a quicker recovery after the next storm hits South Florida. Hurricane Wilma caused an estimated \$4 million in damage to stations, offices and other facilities, said Joe Giuliatti, executive director of the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority.

[Self-propelled cars returning to Tri-Rail in 2006](#)

(11/15/2005 © Palm Beach Post)

Remember the bright red and yellow rail cars that ran on the Tri-Rail line last year? They should be back in service in early 2006, painted in Tri-Rail's colors with orange, green and blue stripes. The return of the self-propelled cars, a combination locomotive and passenger coach, was delayed a few months after a mishap at the manufacturing plant in Colorado.

[Scanner can detect explosives in shoes](#)

(11/15/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

In the post-9/11 world of airport security patdowns, X-ray checkpoints and metal detectors, a subsidiary of one local company is working to streamline that process. Quantum Magnetics, a Newark, Calif., division of Lakewood Ranch's GE Security, has developed the prototype of a Shoe Scanner that can detect explosive devices without passengers having to remove their shoes.

WEDNESDAY, 11/16/05

[New bill would bring drilling](#)

(11/16/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

TALLAHASSEE - New legislation that would bring natural gas drilling 20 miles off coastlines in Florida and other states is scheduled to be heard by a U.S. House Committee in Washington, D.C., today. The bill, introduced Tuesday, is the latest in a series of attempts to expand offshore drilling due to price increases and shortages linked to fuel supply disruptions caused by Hurricanes Katrina.

[Housing fattens state's wallet](#)

(11/16/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

TALLAHASSEE -- Even economists have a tough time explaining Florida's hard-charging housing market. But as Gov. Jeb Bush and lawmakers work on a new state budget in the coming months, they will be able to enjoy the ride. With real-estate sales continuing to soar, state economists said Tuesday that Florida will bring in about \$3.2 billion more in tax dollars over a two-year period than had been predicted earlier.

[THE 511 ON TRAFFIC JAMS](#)

(11/16/2005 © Florida Times-Union)

With the busy holiday travel season just around the corner, motorists hitting the road in Florida will be able to get advance warning of traffic delays by dialing 511. On Thursday,

the state Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration will officially launch the statewide service.

[Lights back, but out of sync](#)

(11/16/2005 © Miami Herald)

Although most of the traffic lights are up, it still takes Debbie Bouhenguel, an accountant from North Lauderdale, an hour to make her 25 minute drive to her job in Plantation. "I take the streets - Pine Island Road, Rock Island Road. It's still a mess," said Bouhenguel, who doesn't understand why this is so. Broward County's traffic engineering director has the answer: The lights still have not been computer-synchronized.

[Traffic influx answers sought](#)

(11/16/2005 © Miami Herald)

Hallandale Beach wants to make sure that developers have done enough to handle additional traffic expected from 1,500 condominiums, stores and an entertainment center proposed near Gulfstream Park. City leaders said they are going to hire their own traffic consultant to study how the Villages at Gulfstream will affect roads such as Federal Highway, Hallandale Beach Boulevard and Interstate 95.

[The missing ingredient](#)

(11/16/2005 © Orlando Sentinel)

Our position: International Drive won't have adequate traffic plan until transit is included. Orange County needs to rethink its plans for easing traffic congestion on International Drive -- the region's poster child for dysfunctional transportation planning. Roads alone won't fix what ails the tourism mecca.

[Gas tax gets 10 more years attached](#)

(11/16/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

BROOKSVILLE - Motorists will be paying a 2-cent gas tax for another decade so the county can continue to maintain residential roads. The County Commission voted unanimously Tuesday to extend the tax, projected to bring in \$1.7-million annually.

THURSDAY, 11/17/05

[Drivers can now use cell phones to get I-75 traffic updates](#)

(11/17/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

All you can see is the red glow from hundreds of brake lights. You peer out your car window and see a line of cars at a standstill. You're stuck in traffic. But there may now be a way around it, or at least a way to avoid it. Today, drivers everywhere in the state will be able to get real-time traffic information about the interstate highways and Florida's Turnpike by calling 5-1-1.

[Just how bad is traffic? New system to help you](#)

(11/17/2005 © Ft. Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel)

Just in time for the busy holiday travel season, drivers can find out how bad road conditions are throughout the Central Florida region by punching a few buttons on their phone or computer keyboard. Today, the Florida Department of Transportation unveils iFlorida, an automated system that uses everything from the Internet, cell phones and

video cameras to message boards and changing speed-limit signs to make traveling easier. The highlight is an expanded 511 phone system, which was up and running Wednesday night.

[TRAFFIC HEADACHE: Bradenton, Palmetto roadways increasingly congested](#)

(11/17/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

MANATEE - Road congestion, especially in and around Bradenton and Palmetto and the bridges linking them during the morning and afternoon rush hours, has gotten significantly worse in recent days. That's the reason that at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, when Grimes, Goebel, Grimes, Hawkins, Gladfelter and Galvano opened for business, Virginia Davall was not there to greet clients or answer the phone. Davall, the downtown Bradenton law firm's receptionist, was stuck in traffic and 10 minutes late for work.

[County enjoys bond sale windfall](#)

(11/17/2005 © Florida Today)

VIERA - Brevard County got some unexpected dollars out of its fuel-tax revenue bond sale -- about 1.6 million of them. Now, county commissioners must decide what to spend them on. They were counting on \$47 million, but Tuesday's bond sale netted the county \$48.66 million. The money will be paid back with revenue from the gas tax levied by the county. "We got a few more than we thought," Commission Chairman Ron Pritchard said. "I want to make sure every dime goes to transportation projects."

[Air drama: Jets within 100 feet of colliding](#)

(11/17/2005 © Miami Herald)

The near collision of two planes at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport has federal authorities urging installation of technology to improve runway safety. Two airplanes came perilously close to colliding at Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport last week, sparking an investigation by the National Transportation Safety Board and raising questions about the safety of the runways and how incidents are reported.

[Debris loads are wrecking toll plazas](#)

(11/17/2005 © Miami Herald)

File this one under ``Law of Unintended Consequences``: Out-of-state cleanup trucks, filled with downed trees and debris left by Hurricane Wilma, are smacking repeatedly into local toll plazas, causing unexpected traffic jams while repair crews inspect roofs and reinstall damaged SunPass toll-collection technology.

[A Hub City traffic authority?](#)

(11/17/2005 © Northwest Florida Daily News)

CRESTVIEW — Attention gridlocked North Okaloosa County motorists: Your senators and representatives in the state Capitol want to hear from you. Members of the Northwest Florida delegation are preparing to introduce legislation that would create a traffic authority to help solve the bottleneck on State Road 85, and a few options are on the table.

FRIDAY, 11/18/05

[511 traffic information system expands](#)

(11/18/2005 © Daytona Beach News-Journal)

ORANGE CITY -- Need to get somewhere fast? Not sure which artery is clogged? Motorists can access more traffic information from their telephone now that state transportation officials have launched an expanded Central Florida 511 traffic information system -- just in time for the busy holiday travel period. The upgraded Central Florida 511 system includes an additional 15 major roadways.

[Money woes delay road, bridge projects across state](#)

(11/18/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

Road and bridge projects may be delayed for years in Manatee County and across Florida because the state lacks money to complete them as scheduled. The tentative, five-year work plan for the Florida Department of Transportation shows construction delays for two segments of widening State Road 64 and building the Fort Hamer Bridge in East Manatee.

[Road plan draws fire](#)

(11/18/2005 © Ft. Myers News-Press)

Regional planning officials on Thursday lambasted the state's decision to delay or cut back on road projects in Lee and Collier counties, saying it will likely cost taxpayers millions of dollars. Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council members sharply criticized the state's tentative five-year work program. They also hammered away at the controversial "pay-as-you-grow" plan, a growth management law designed to ensure roads are growing as fast as Southwest Florida communities. "This isn't pay as you grow; it's pray as you go," said Jon Thaxton, a Sarasota County commissioner.

[Ethanol producer gets air permit from DEP](#)

(11/18/2005 © Bradenton Herald)

PALMETTO - Tampa-based U.S. EnviroFuels, which hopes to build the state's first 40-million-gallon per year corn-ethanol-production facility at Port Manatee, has been granted an air permit by the Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

[Babcock would add cars to maxed out roads](#)

(11/18/2005 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

Funding short for traffic needs, officials say The proposed development of Babcock Ranch could spur "domino" developments across rural eastern Charlotte County, triggering the need for hundreds of millions of dollars in road improvements that are not currently planned or funded. But the proposed development isn't the only project to overload roads and tap out state transportation funds.

[Developers must cover road costs](#)

(11/18/2005 © Charlotte Sun Herald)

While the broad strokes of an agreement for the state to buy most of Babcock Ranch and for Charlotte to allow Kitson & Partners to develop the rest in exchange for future water access are falling into place, how the developer will pay for roads and other infrastructure is still unknown.

[Bullet train repeal group fined \\$10,000](#)

(11/18/2005 © St. Petersburg Times)

TALLAHASSEE - A political group that led last year's successful drive to strip high-speed rail from the state Constitution was fined \$10,000 Thursday by the Florida Elections Commission. Derail the Bullet Train, or DEBT, was fined for failing to disclose names and addresses of paid petition circulators on forms it submitted in 65 of 67 counties.