

They and other political appointees have spent the latter part of President Bush's two terms laboring behind the scenes to shrink the federal role in road-building and public transportation. They have also sought to turn highways into commodities that can be sold or leased to private firms and used by motorists for a price. In Duvall and Gribbin's view, unleashing the private sector and introducing market forces could lead to innovation and more choices for the public, much as the breakup of AT&T transformed telecommunications.

But their ideas and actions have alarmed transit advocates, the trucking industry, states struggling to build rail projects and members of Congress from both parties.

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