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The Westshore Alliance endorses the Hillsborough transportation referendum

The Westshore Alliance is the voice of Tampa's Westshore District. Our organization's mission is to promote, shape future growth and foster economic prosperity of the Westshore Business District.

Transportation has been the number one priority for the Westshore Alliance, dating back to our first meeting in 1983. In the following four decades, Westshore has grown with 100,000 workers, 15,000 residents and thousands of visitors daily. But the transportation network has not kept pace with growth. It is for this reason that the Westshore Alliance Board of Directors voted unanimously on October 5 to support the 1% transportation sales surtax referendum on the November 2022 ballot.

"The need for improved transportation options continues to grow," Westshore Alliance President and Carlton Fields shareholder Ken Tinkler said. "The referendum plan is the best way to address it and support economic development in Westshore and beyond. We have achieved so much as a community; we must ensure that our transportation system meets the needs of everyone who lives in, works in, or visits Hillsborough County in the decades ahead."

The referendum plan would allocate 54.5% of funds to roads and safety projects. These funds would be divided between Hillsborough County, and the Cities of Tampa, Plant City, and Temple Terrace, based on their populations. Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority would receive 45% of funds for transit projects. The remaining half-percent would be for planning purposes.

The variety of uses would benefit the Westshore District. The reconstruction of West Shore Boulevard has been a priority of the Alliance for more than 30 years. It is long overdue for thoughtful redesign and reconstruction. Increasing walkability and accessibility along West Shore Blvd would facilitate continued redevelopment in the corridor and benefit the surrounding neighborhoods. Streets like Spruce Street and Lois Avenue need features such as better sidewalks, improved traffic signals, and transit access that other communities have in support of businesses and residents.

"Hillsborough County cannot continue to have an underfunded bus system, crumbling roads, and a terrible pedestrian safety record," said Westshore Alliance Executive Director Michael Maurino. "Voting yes for the transportation referendum is an investment in improving the quality of life for residents in Westshore and across Hillsborough County."

The referendum would allow Tampa and Westshore to take advantage of the new Howard Frankland Bridge and reconstruction of the Westshore Interchange. Those projects will facilitate new development and pedestrian connections from Westshore to the Riverwalk by reconnecting the Westshore street grid. But local investment is needed to match state and federal dollars to accomplish this vision. The referendum would give Westshore an opportunity to fully realize the plans that were written decades ago for a livable and walkable community.

We encourage the employees of our 408 member companies and our neighbors to vote YES on the Hillsborough transportation referendum. Early voting begins October 24. Election Day is November 8. Vote by mail ballots must be returned to the Supervisor of Elections office by 7pm on November 8. To register to vote, request a mail ballot, or check your status, visit VoteHillsborough.gov.

For more information about the Alliance, visit WestshoreAlliance.org. For more information about the transportation referendum, visit the campaign website [at AllForTransportation.com](http://AllForTransportation.com).

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