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Hillsborough County

A FLORIDA COUNTY GUIDE · GULF COAST

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REGION
Gulf Coast

COMMUNITIES TO START WITH
Tampa, Plant City,
Temple Terrace,
Riverview

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The Tampa Bay employment center blends city neighborhoods, port and airport access, major healthcare, suburban growth and agricultural communities.

Hillsborough County places Tampa’s urban core, Port Tampa Bay, the airport, university and medical districts, established suburbs, fast-growing south-county communities and Plant City’s agricultural landscape inside one large county. The useful question is not simply whether to live in Tampa, but which side of the bay-area job and transportation network fits daily life.

Finance, healthcare, logistics, education, technology, tourism, construction and port activity support multiple employment centers. A downtown or Westshore worker faces a different commute calculation from someone based near USF, the I-75 corridor, MacDill Air Force Base or Plant City.

On a scouting trip, cross the routes that define the shortlist: I-275, I-75, the Selmon Expressway and the major surface roads. Then compare flood and evacuation information, roof and drainage conditions, school assignment and medical access for a real address rather than relying on a broad Tampa label.

Lifestyle: Careers · City life · Transportation

Hillsborough County by the numbers

Population Census estimate	1,522,748	At the last full count 2020 Census	1,459,762
Median age	37.9	Aged 65 and over	15.0%
Under 18	21.6%	Median household income	\$79,540
Median home value what owners estimate	\$371,500	Homeownership	61.5%
People per household	2.56	Average commute	28.8 minutes

U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, published January 2026, read September 19, 2026. Survey figures are estimates; median home value is what owners estimate their home is worth, not a sale price.

Communities to compare

Tampa

Tampa includes downtown and Channel District living, historic neighborhoods, Westshore employment, South Tampa, university-area communities and broad suburban sections. Narrow the city by work corridor and flood exposure before comparing properties.

Temple Terrace

Temple Terrace is a compact independent city beside the USF and medical corridor, with established neighborhoods and Hillsborough River access. Verify city services, flood conditions and travel patterns around Fowler Avenue, Busch Boulevard and I-75.

Plant City

Plant City offers a smaller historic center, agricultural surroundings and direct I-4 access between Tampa and Lakeland. Test the commute in both directions and compare city neighborhoods with rural or unincorporated parcels that may use wells, septic systems or longer service routes.

Riverview

Riverview is a major south-county growth area with extensive subdivisions and access toward I-75 and the Selmon Expressway. Compare individual developments by association costs, school assignment, road capacity and the exact drive into Tampa rather than treating the whole mailing area as interchangeable.

Checks before Hillsborough County becomes the answer

- ☐ **Choose the Tampa job center first.** Map the actual destination—downtown, Westshore, MacDill, USF, the port, Brandon or I-75—before assuming a countywide commute.
 - ☐ **Check flood and evacuation separately.** Flood zones and hurricane evacuation zones answer different questions. Review both, plus elevation and road access, for the exact address.
 - ☐ **Drive the bottleneck.** Test I-275, I-75, the Selmon Expressway or the major surface-road segment at the hour your household would depend on it.
 - ☐ **Price older and newer construction honestly.** Compare roof, electrical, plumbing, wind mitigation and flood exposure in established areas with association costs, taxes and construction traffic in new communities.
 - ☐ **Map hospitals and specialty care.** Tampa has major medical systems, but travel across the county can be substantial. Confirm routine and specialty routes from the neighborhood.
 - ☐ **Verify services outside city limits.** A Tampa mailing address may be unincorporated. Confirm municipality, utilities, trash, fire service, taxes and permitting for the parcel.
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Questions to answer for Hillsborough County

One county, several housing markets

Urban condos, historic bungalows, established suburbs, master-planned growth and rural east-county properties carry different tax, insurance, maintenance and transportation profiles. Compare within the same job corridor.

Employment is metropolitan, not centralized

Downtown, Westshore, the port, MacDill, USF and the I-75 corridor each pull traffic in different directions. Two-worker households should build a route plan before a property shortlist.

Healthcare and universities are major anchors

Tampa General, USF Health, Moffitt and other systems create strong care and education options, especially near central Tampa and the university district. Distance and bridge-free access still matter.

Expressways help—and concentrate traffic

I-4, I-75, I-275 and the Selmon Expressway connect the county, while fast-growing surface corridors can become the daily constraint. Test normal and alternate routes before choosing.

Water risk changes block by block

Bay, river, low-lying and inland addresses can have very different flood and evacuation realities. Price coverage and understand the route out before treating a neighborhood as storm-ready.

Places that reveal the county

Busch Gardens Tampa Bay

A 335-acre African-themed park on Tampa's north side, running since 1959 and built around roller coasters and a large collection of animals.

Ybor City Historic District

The old cigar quarter northeast of downtown Tampa, founded in 1886 and named a National Historic Landmark district in 1990.

ZooTampa at Lowry Park

A 63-acre zoo in Seminole Heights with more than 1,300 animals, and the only nonprofit hospital in the world devoted to critically ill wild manatees.

Tampa Theatre

A 1926 atmospheric movie palace in downtown Tampa, still showing films under a ceiling painted to look like a night sky.

Tampa Bay History Center

A three-floor museum on the downtown waterfront covering twelve thousand years of life around Tampa Bay, and a Smithsonian Affiliate.

Lettuce Lake Conservation Park

A 240-acre county park on the Hillsborough River in north Tampa, known for a long boardwalk through cypress swamp and an observation tower.

Alafia River State Park

A former phosphate mine near Lithia turned into a state park, with the steepest hills and the hardest mountain bike trails in Florida.

Tampa Riverwalk

A 2.6-mile paved path along the Hillsborough River that ties downtown Tampa's parks, museums and restaurants into one walk.

The Florida Aquarium

A downtown Tampa aquarium holding more than 7,000 animals and plants, with serious coral research going on behind the public galleries.

Museum of Science & Industry

Tampa's science center on Fowler Avenue, open since 1982, now carrying the name Museum of Science & Innovation and built around a very large dome theater.

Henry B. Plant Museum

The south wing of the 1891 Tampa Bay Hotel, kept as a museum of the Gilded Age inside what is now the University of Tampa.

Glazer Children's Museum

A hands-on museum for young children in downtown Tampa, opened in 2010 beside Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park.

Ballast Point Park

A bayfront park at the south end of Bayshore Boulevard in south Tampa, with a fishing pier, a boat ramp and a splash pad.

Dinosaur World

An outdoor walk in Plant City among nearly 200 life-size dinosaur sculptures set in gardens of ancient plants.

Curtis Hixon Waterfront Park

An eight-acre park on the Hillsborough River in downtown Tampa, opened in 2010 on the site of the city's first convention center.

Tampa Museum of Art

A downtown art museum on the Riverwalk holding Greek and Roman antiquities alongside modern and contemporary work, in a building that changes color at night.

Tampa Electric's Manatee Viewing Center

A winter viewing area in Apollo Beach, free to enter, where manatees gather by the hundreds in warm water discharged from a power station.

Adventure Island

A 30-acre water park across the street from Busch Gardens, open since 1980 and run by the same company.

American Victory Ship & Museum

A 1945 Victory cargo ship tied up in the Channel District, restored as a museum and still able to put to sea under her own power.

Sparkman Wharf

An open-air waterfront gathering place in Tampa's Channel District, built in 2018 out of the shell of the old Channelside Bay Plaza.

Beaches in Hillsborough County

Always verify current parking, fees, water quality, lifeguard coverage and posted rules before leaving.

Ben T. Davis Beach

Picnic Island Park Beach

Apollo Beach Nature Preserve Shoreline

Cypress Point Park Beach

Davis Islands Beach

Where to check

Hillsborough County Government · Official resident services, planning, property and public-safety information. [hcfl.gov](https://www.hcfl.gov)

Hillsborough Public Works · County road, bridge, traffic and stormwater responsibilities. [hcfl.gov](https://www.hcfl.gov)

Hillsborough Transit Information · Official county information about HART public transportation. [hcfl.gov](https://www.hcfl.gov)

Hillsborough Stormwater Program · County drainage, stormwater maintenance and property-owner resources. [hcfl.gov](https://www.hcfl.gov)