

WHY FUND MULTI-USE PAVED TRAILS WITH PART OF \$40 MILLION IN CIT FUNDS?

(AND SPECIFICALLY, WHY FUND UPPER TAMPA BAY TRAIL PHASE IV & SOUTH COAST GREENWAY PHASE III?) -Compiled by the Hillsborough Greenways Committee 3/11/08

- To implement BOCC-approved 1995 *Hillsborough Greenways Master Plan*.
- County's Capital Projects Request List includes \$65 million of unfunded Greenways Program trail projects (all of which are identified in the Greenways Master Plan).
- County's 2006 Community Attitude and Interest Survey conducted by Leisure Vision to establish future parks and recreation priorities found the highest support for developing new walking and biking trails (81% -- 62% very supportive; 19% somewhat supportive).
- Multi-use paved trails are available for all types of users and all skill levels – families and individuals of all ages. Thousands of people who bicycle, skate, run or walk can use a trail each month of the year for recreation, fitness, health, as well as non-motorized transportation. For example, Hillsborough County Parks Department maintains counters on the Upper Tampa Bay Trail, and based on those records, estimates that 300,000 people/year use the existing 8-miles of trail.
- The 1996 CIT Referendum specifically calls out “trails” as a type of infrastructure to fund with the Community Investment Tax.
- While trails do have operational costs, maintenance and operation are not as site-intensive as for facilities such as recreation centers and athletic fields; and on a per capita basis, the number of staff needed is less than for those other types of recreation facilities. For example, trails are not operated at night. Thus, electric bills are lower. There is no turf management, and regular mowing is limited to 6-foot widths on either side of trail. Also, no recreational program staffing is required to operate a trail facility.
- **UPPER TAMPA BAY TRAIL PHASE IV** (7-mile link to Suncoast Trail) –
 - ❑ When the 7-mile link is completed, it will create a 57-mile regional paved trail through 3 counties, with links to other trails such as the future Northwest Recreational Corridor Trail and the existing Starkey Wilderness Trail.
 - ❑ It will include a permanent replacement trailhead for the popular, but temporary, Suncoast Trailhead on Lutz-Lake Fern Rd, which is located in the right-of-way of the future parkway interchange.
 - ❑ Upper Tampa Bay Trail Phase IV qualifies for federal Enhancement grant funding and has the potential to receive up to \$7 million in reimbursement over a number of years to offset the \$11,356,000 cost to design and construct the project.
 - ❑ Acquisition of the trail corridor by Hillsborough County will be completed in 2008.
 - ❑ Completion of the Upper Tampa Bay Trail link to the Suncoast Trail is the #1 regional priority of the West Central Florida MPO Chair's Coordinating Committee and the #1 funding priority of the Hillsborough Greenways Committee.
- **SOUTH COAST GREENWAY PHASE III** (3-mile northern extension to Symmes Rd) –
 - ❑ South Coast Greenway Phase III is an existing, partially funded Capital Improvement Project (89004) and is approved by the BOCC for future funding in the amount of \$1,427,000, but no funding source has been identified.
 - ❑ #2 funding priority of the Hillsborough Greenways Committee.
 - ❑ South Coast Greenway Phase I (89003), from College Ave to 19th Ave, is fully funded by the County and will be under design in 2008, with construction scheduled in 2010. South Coast Greenway Phase II, from 19th Ave to Big Bend Road, is developer-funded and anticipated to be completed in 2011.
 - ❑ If funded, Phase III will extend the trail to Symmes Road and create a 10-mile, north-south, multi-use paved trail facility for the rapidly growing population in South County.

