



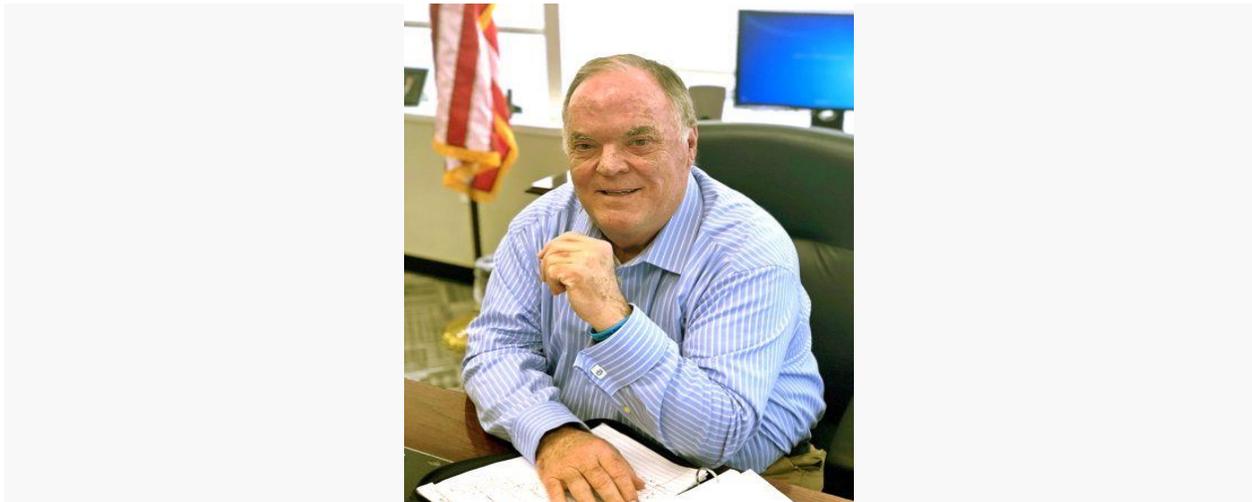
## SOUTH SHORE: Tax office moving

Published on: June 13, 2018

# Tax collector's office in Ruskin to move to new, standalone building this summer

By **LOIS KINDLE**

The Hillsborough County Tax Collector's office, which many say is the most efficient and consumer-friendly county government office in South Shore, is about to get even better.



Hillsborough County Tax Collector Doug Belden will open a new, 14,000-square-foot standalone building on 30th Street in Ruskin to replace the leased space in Sun Point Shopping Center, where his South Shore office has been since 1991.

HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY TAX OFFICE PHOTO

Barring the unexpected, its employees will vacate roughly 6,800 square feet of rented space in Ruskin's Sun Point Shopping Center in August to move into a new, 14,000-square-foot standalone building just east of the Southshore Regional Service Center. Construction began on the building last December.

“This new building is being developed by Oklahoma-based Manhattan Construction Company on parcels owned by HART (the Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority), and Hillsborough County,” said Doug Belden, Hillsborough County tax collector. Its cost, including all interior improvements, is estimated at \$3 million.

Belden said buying the land on the open market would probably have cost an additional \$1 million.

“We’re leasing the property for \$1 per year for 50 years and will have full control of maintenance,” said the former real estate developer and entrepreneur, adding taxpayers will save about \$135,000 per year currently being paid in rent for the Sun Point office.

County economic development data shows the South Shore area’s population has grown 74 percent since 2000 and is projected to increase by another 10.3 percent by 2020.

“The reason for this expansion project is demand,” said Belden. “The project is part of my ongoing commitment to provide excellent customer service. That includes having a facility large enough to accommodate this rapidly expanding area.”

The new office at 406 30th St. S.E. will have parking for 300 vehicles and be open 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesday. Residents can pay taxes, obtain or renew driver’s licenses and Florida ID cards; register boats, vessels, mobile homes and vehicles; get disabled parking permits; and purchase hunting and fishing licenses and more. Concealed weapons permits are handled only at the tax collector’s north Tampa office, 3011 University Center Drive.

Belden’s cost-effective partnerships with the county and other government agencies have been beneficial to county taxpayers. His conservative budget practices and inclusion of private sector ideas have enabled the Tax Collector’s Office to operate “better, cheaper and faster,” he said. The South Shore office maintains a 97 percent or higher, good to excellent customer-service rating. As part of their partnership agreement, HART will get a new bus stop on 30th Street.

For more information, call the Hillsborough County Tax Collector customer service line at 813-635-5200 or visit [www.hillstax.org](http://www.hillstax.org).



Now under construction and almost completed, this new office building will house an expanded Hillsborough County Tax Collector operation to address the continued growth in South Shore. Barring the unforeseen, it’s expected to open by August.