



October 26, 2023

The Importance of Tourism Marketing and Strong ROI

Last week, [CFHLA](#) President & CEO, **Robert Agrusa** joined **Dana Young**, President & CEO of [Visit Florida](#) and State **Senator Ed Hooper [R]**, [District 21, Palm Harbor](#) on an episode of In Focus with **Allison Walker** on Spectrum News to discuss the importance of tourism marketing and its strong return on investment (including Visit Florida and our local DMO's including [Visit Orlando](#), [Experience Kissimmee](#) and [Orlando North](#)), our industry's incredible impact on our state and local economy and our organization's future outlook.

Click on the image below to re-watch the interview.



Orange County Board Votes to Approve Convention Center Completion with TDT Revenues

On Tuesday, October 3, the [Orange County Board of County Commissioners](#) voted to approve allocating Tourist Development Tax (TDT) funding for the \$560 million Phase 5A completion of the [Orange County Convention Center \(OCCC\)](#).

The Phase 5A project will include enhancements to the North-South Building, featuring an enclosed, air-conditioned connection between the North and South concourses that includes 60,000 square feet of meeting space, an 80,000-square-foot ballroom and a grand entrance to the North-South Building along Convention Way. **It will also create millions of dollars in new investment, temporary construction jobs, future permanent hotel jobs and eventual convention business that will stem from the hotel projects.**

This was a huge win for our industry and we are very grateful for the support of Mayor Demings and the BOCC, on this much needed project that was initially approved pre-pandemic!

Additionally, the BOCC voted unanimously to support **UCF's FBC Mortgage Stadium Tower with \$90M over 10 years, ARC with \$75M over 5 years and the Arts and Cultural Affairs with approximately \$69.4M over 5 years.**

These proposals were recommended by the TDT Citizen Advisory Task Force and presented by Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings.

However, it was disappointing to see the TDT conversations relating to the Amway Center, Camping World Stadium, and Sports Incentive Fund put on hold until further information is gathered, and a work session is scheduled to discuss the future contract with Visit Orlando and how those dollars can be used.

As we have previously stated, utilizing the proper investment of TDT creates jobs, significantly increases the sales tax collection and makes our community a better place to live, work and play. Therefore, we hope you can join us in support of these critically important projects on November 14th and help get them across the finish line!

[CLICK HERE](#) to read the full story.



October Governmental Affairs Committee



On Wednesday, October 18, the CFHLA Governmental Affairs Committee held its most recent meeting at the [Big Fire Restaurant at Universal Orlando Resort's City Walk](#) (Thank you, again John McReynolds and Melanie Becker).

This month's meeting featured [Orange County Comptroller Phil Diamond](#) as our special guest speaker.

We truly appreciate the Comptroller's time and we thank him for allowing our members to share their concerns surrounding the TDT conversations. The hospitality and tourism community looks forward to being a continued resource to you and your team and we hope to work more closely with you for the betterment of our community!

Our next CFHLA Governmental Affairs Committee meeting is scheduled to take place on **Wednesday, November 8**, at the [DoubleTree By Hilton at the Entrance to Universal Orlando](#).

Please Support Our CFHLA PAC/PC Endorsements on November 7

As a reminder, **Tuesday, November 7** is Election Day in the state of Florida.

CFHLA is proud to **endorse and support the following [pro-hospitality candidates](#)** below who will also be on the November 7 ballot and we strongly encourage each of our members to do the same.

Polling Hours

On Election Day, the polls are open from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm. If you are in line by 7:00 pm, you will be allowed to vote.

Polling Locations

Registered voters are required to vote at the assigned precinct of his/her legal residence. Contact your local Supervisor of Elections to find your precinct.

For information on voter registration or confirming your polling location, please click [HERE](#) to contact your local supervisor of elections.



The Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association's (CFHLA) PAC and PC endorsed candidates for the 2023 Elections.

Mayor, City of Orlando



Buddy Dyer
Mayor, City of Orlando

ELECTION DAY
NOVEMBER 7, 2023

Find Your Polling Location:
Orange County: www.ocfelections.com
Osceola County: www.voteosceola.com
Seminole County: www.voteseminole.org

Orlando City Commission



Tony Ortiz
City Commissioner,
District 2



Patty Sheehan
City Commissioner,
District 4



Bakari F. Burns
City Commissioner,
District 6

Florida House of Representatives



Erika Booth
Florida House,
District 35



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Orange County Approves Universal Special Taxing District Tied to Sunshine Corridor



The following appeared in the October 10 edition of the Orlando Business Journal

On October 10, Orange County unanimously approved the creation of a special taxing district called the **Shingle Creek Transit & Utility Community Development District** from [Universal Orlando Resort](#) that will help fund the proposed Sunshine Corridor for passenger trains to connect to [International Drive](#) and [Orlando International Airport](#).

[Universal Destinations & Experiences](#) applied to the county for the quasi-public district on 719 acres that primarily includes the site of its upcoming Epic Universe theme park — which is projected to open in 2025 — as well as 13 acres for a proposed train station along Destination Parkway tied to the shared rail corridor for Miami-based intercity passenger train [Brightline](#) and local commuter train [SunRail](#).

This is great news for our International Drive area hotels and businesses and [CLICK HERE](#) to read all of the details!

2024 Legislative Session - Committee Week 1 Recap

On October 16, the Florida Legislature officially commenced its first of five full committee weeks ahead of the 2024 Legislative Session. Several Senate and House committees met throughout the week with a focus on agency

presentations and updates as well as taking a retrospective glance at the implementation of the 2023 Session's laws.

Additionally, the Senator Ben Albritton was officially named by Republicans as the Senate President-Designate for the 2024-26 term. Though dependent upon the Republicans keeping the majority and Albritton winning his reelection, the President-Designate stated his top priorities are agriculture, water quality, and the foster care system. He has also stated that affordable housing and property insurance remain a prime areas of focus moving forward.

Throughout the 2024 legislative session, CFHLA will be monitoring the progression of several bills that are important to our industry and we look forward to finalizing our 2024 Legislative Priorities in the coming weeks.

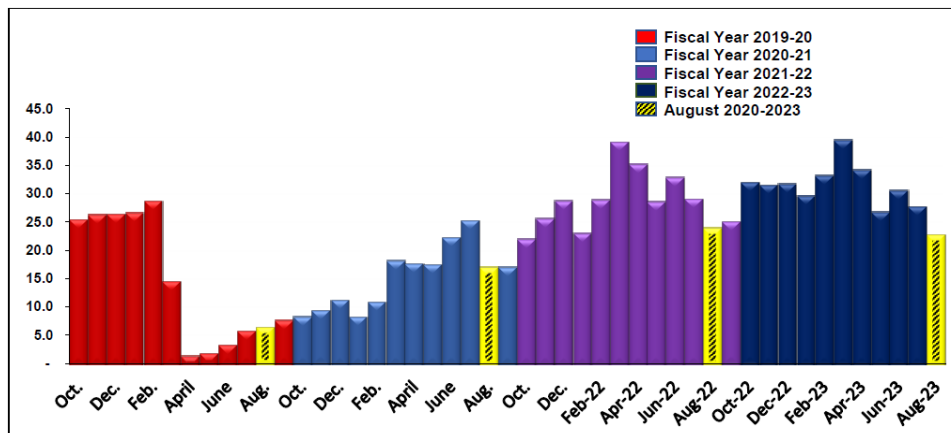
Regional Tourist Development Tax Update

Orange County

The Tourist Development Tax (TDT) collections received by Orange County for the month of **August 2023 were \$22,172,700**. That is a **5.6% decrease** compared to August 2022.

Compared to last month, **August collections were lower than July collections by \$5.0 million**. However, **August Collections were higher than August 2021** collections by \$5.6 million.

The chart below shows monthly TDT collections for the current fiscal year and the previous three fiscal years.



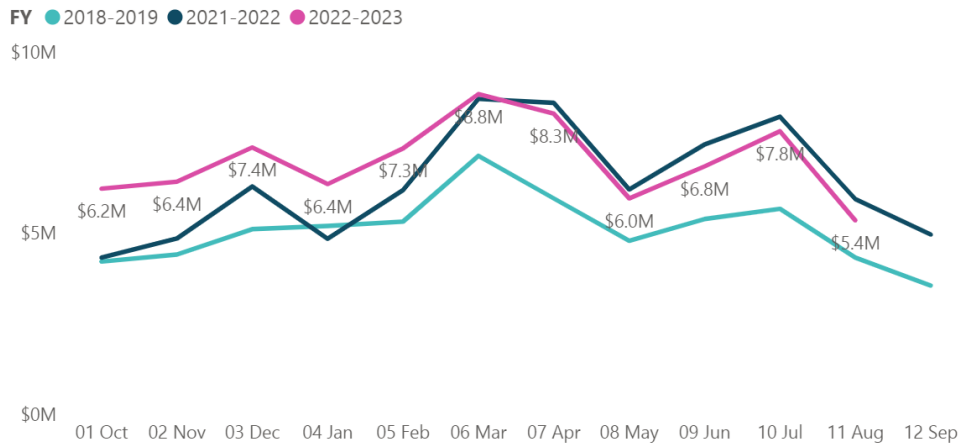
Osceola County

Osceola County collected **\$5.4M in TDT for the month of August**, representing a **10% decline from 2022**.

However, this was the second-best August TDT collection in Osceola County history.

For the fiscal year TDT collections stand at \$76.9M. With one month remaining, 2023 collections are already greater than any prior fiscal year totals, since TDT collections began.

TDT Osceola County

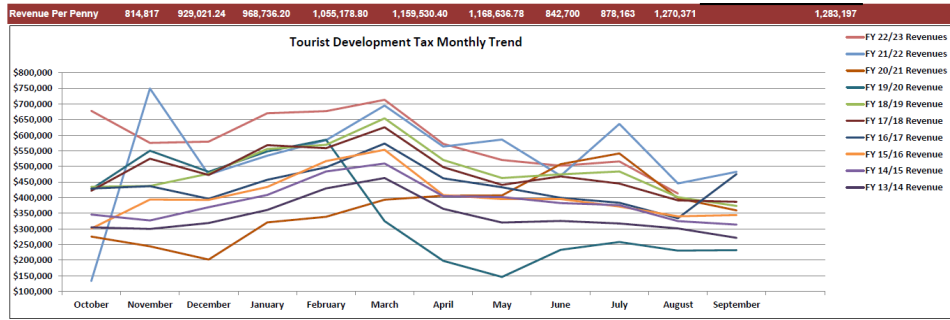


Seminole County

Seminole County announced that the **Tourist Development Tax (TDT) collection for the month of August was at \$413,351**.

This was the second highest August TDT collection for Seminole County history.

For the FY 2022-2023, **Seminole County has now collected \$6,415,987 in TDT, which surpasses the total revenue collected in 2021-22.**



DONATE

CFHLA MEMBERS - Please **consider making a donation of \$50** via the link below to the CFHLA PAC/PC. All contributions help CFHLA expand its efforts to support and endorse Hospitality-Friendly candidates for local and state offices. **In the 2022 General election, all 16 CFHLA endorsed candidates were successfully elected into office.**

[DONATE NOW](#)

As a reminder, all CFHLA Board Members, PAC/PC Board Members, and ARC Board Members have committed to contributing \$150 to the CFHLA PAC/PC in 2023. If you are a part of one or more of these groups, please consider fulfilling your commitment today.

IN THE NEWS

[Meet the candidates for Florida House District 35 special elections](#) - clickorlando.com

[Orlando Magic find developers for sports/entertainment district](#) - Orlando Business Journal

[Nov. 14 should be circled on Orlando business calendars](#) - Orlando Business Journal

[Incumbents Buddy Dyer, Patty Sheehan and Bakari Burns hold fundraising edge](#) – Orlando Sentinel

[How Orange County Convention Center expansion benefits Central Florida businesses](#) - Orlando Business Journal

[Orange County Convention Center, UCF win hotel tax funding](#) - Orlando Business Journal

[Disney vs. DeSantis legal fight: What latest filings show](#) - Orlando Business Journal

[Orange County commissioners back four tourist tax projects](#) - Spectrum News

[Osceola Heritage Park General Manager Robb Larson Recognized Among Top Leaders for the Orlando Business Journal's C-Suite Awards](#) - positivelyosceola.com

[UNCG secures \\$24M construction loan for Kissimmee wellness resort](#) – GrowthSpotter

[Florida 2023 Power Players award winners Orlando](#) - Orlando Business Journal

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About CFHLA

6675 Westwood Blvd #210, Orlando, FL 32821

The mission of the Central Florida Hotel and Lodging Association is to represent the Central Florida Hospitality Industry, by setting the standard of excellence through advocacy, collaboration, education, recognition, and service.