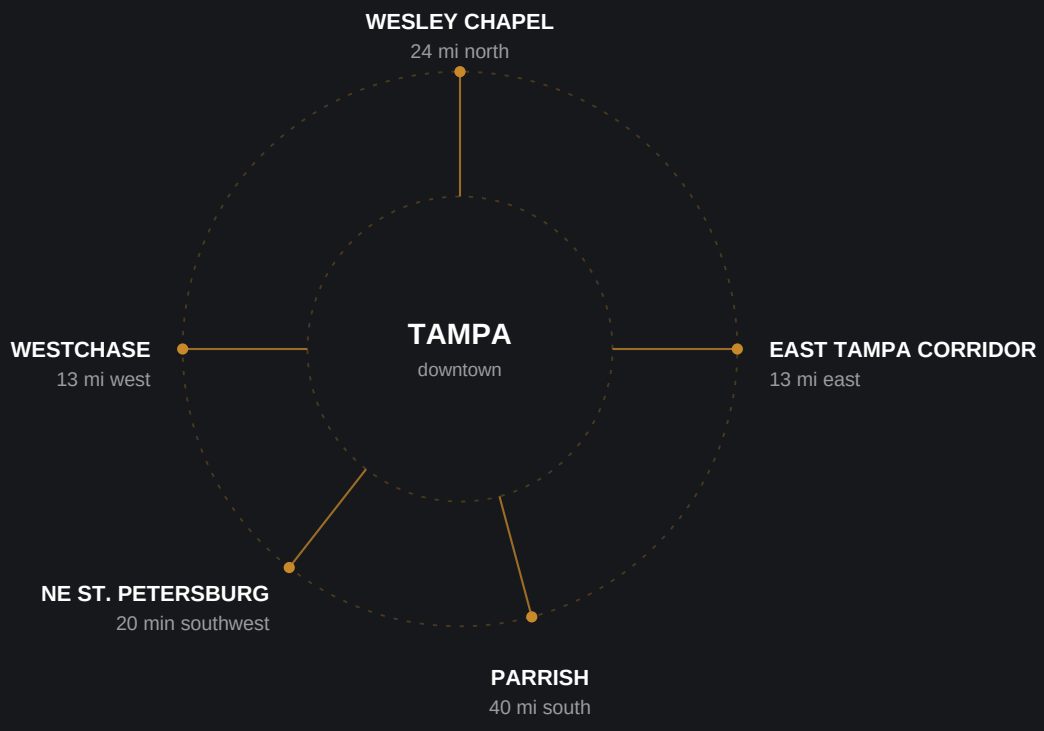
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VIDEO COMPANION GUIDE · AUGUST 2026

5 Tampa-Adjacent Areas Worth Your Attention

Close to everything. On top of nothing.



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START HERE

Tampa Bay is, in my opinion, the best big city in Florida — it is genuinely balanced. But it is also three counties, and that makes it convoluted to shop from out of state, especially relocating without much familiarity. So this guide is not about Tampa itself. It is about five adjacent areas that each solve a different version of the same problem: how to be close to everything without living on top of it. Read the takeaway on each one before you read the price — the trade-off is the decision.

THE LAY OF THE LAND

HILLSBOROUGH

Tampa as you picture it — downtown, the airport, MacDill, the working districts.

PINELLAS

The coastal county with the beaches. St. Pete and Clearwater. Suburbia barely exists.

PASCO

Just above the city. Land, space and time — which is why it got master-planned.

MANATEE

South, toward Sarasota. Where the next decade of new construction is heading.

AT A GLANCE

Trailing 12-month figures as of August 2026

AREA	COUNTY	MEDIAN	TYP. SIZE	WHAT YOU ARE BUYING
1. Wesley Chapel	Pasco	$425,000	~2,000 sf	New construction with a real master plan
2. East Tampa corridor	Hillsborough	$380,000	~1,900 sf	Commutability at the lowest entry price
3. Westchase	Hillsborough	$563,000	similar, more $	Location — city one way, beach the other
4. Northeast St. Pete	Pinellas	$880,000	~1,760 sf	Charm, walkability, 8 miles to sand
5. Parrish	Manatee	$392,000	larger plans	Tomorrow's Lakewood Ranch, priced today

THREE THINGS TO ANSWER FIRST

1 What is the drive, honestly?

Not the mileage — the drive. Twenty-four miles north-to-south into Tampa behaves nothing like thirteen miles east-to-west. If you will be in the working districts three to five days a week, that answer alone removes two of these five from your list.

2 New and planned, or older with character?

Pasco and Manatee are new almost by definition, and master-planned on purpose. Northeast St. Pete is 1950s bungalows and front porches. Both are right answers. They are not the same answer.

3 How often will you truly go to the beach?

Almost everyone overestimates this. If it is a weekend thing, 45 minutes is nothing and you should buy the better house. If it is genuinely a daily thing, you are looking at the wrong three areas.

01 Wesley Chapel

PASCO COUNTY · ~24 MILES NORTH OF DOWNTOWN TAMPA

The master-plan capital of the three-county Tampa Bay area.

MEDIAN, LAST 12 MO.	AVERAGE SIZE	TO UNDER CONTRACT
$425,000	~2,000 sq ft	60 days or less

WHY IT WORKS

- Pasco had what Hillsborough and Pinellas did not: land, and time. That is what allowed true master planning instead of new-home communities scattered about.
- Neighborhoods built around shared amenities — schools, churches, sports, crystal-clear water lagoons, smarter streets. Everything but your workplace.
- The strongest value play here if you want a house built in the last 7 to 10 years and more than 1,500 square feet. New construction is also far simpler to buy remotely than resale.

ADAM'S TAKE

Twenty-four miles into Tampa does not mean twenty-four minutes. I made that drive for years and got to where I could not enjoy any of what I moved up there for. But if you can stay local, this is a genuinely self-contained city, and everything being new makes it feel clean and fresh. The beach is 45 minutes out, which is fine — you are not going daily.

Best fit if: You work from home or nearly, want new construction, and want your whole life inside a short radius.

02 The East Tampa Corridor

HILLSBOROUGH · BRANDON, RIVERVIEW, VALRICO, FISHHAWK, PROGRESS VILLAGE

The most efficient way to reach working Tampa without living in it.

MEDIAN, LAST 12 MO.	AVERAGE SIZE	TO UNDER CONTRACT
$380,000	~1,900 sq ft	30 days or less

WHY IT WORKS

- Thirteen to fourteen miles east-to-west is a fundamentally different drive than twenty-five miles north-to-south in this metro. That gap is the entire argument for the area.
- Efficient access to downtown, the airport, and MacDill — which looks incredible on a map but is not ringed by fifty suburban neighborhoods.
- Suburban housing where there is honestly little else in between: the inner ring is urban, then Temple Terrace, then Tampa Palms. Lennar and D.R. Horton keep new-build pricing accessible.

ADAM'S TAKE

This one is earned by the commute — you have to actually value it. Driving in three to five days a week, or hitting the airport often? Then you cannot be twenty-five miles out. It will not feel as polished or as master-planned as Wesley Chapel and it is not pretending to. Take the goods with the bads: you get the space without hating your life in daily traffic.

Best fit if: First-time buyer, growing family, or military relocation that needs the extra bedroom and the yard — and still has to show up somewhere.

03 Westchase

HILLSBOROUGH · A TAMPA ZIP CODE, NOT ITS OWN CITY

The balance play — near-equal distance to downtown Tampa and Clearwater Beach.

MEDIAN, LAST 12 MO.	THE PREMIUM	VINTAGE
$563,000	**~$100K over #1 or #2**	**newer than most suburbs**

WHY IT WORKS

- Roughly the same mileage as the East Tampa corridor, pointed the other way — toward water. A middle ground if you cannot fully commit to Pinellas, where suburban living barely exists.
- It has its own master plan and town center, which the older west-side options — Northdale, Carrollwood — do not. Not all of it was built in 1980.
- Popular with executives working northern St. Pete and Tampa who want the better family setup without doubling anyone's drive.

ADAM'S TAKE

Be honest that you are buying location, because at this price it has to be the reason. You will pay about a hundred grand more than Wesley Chapel or Brandon and you will not get a bigger house for it. Almost nobody says "I want beach proximity, so I will choose inland Tampa Bay." You get here by elimination — and then the beach becomes the bonus.

Best fit if: You want something built in the last 15 to 20 years, a real neighborhood feel, and a short leash in both directions.

04 Northeast St. Petersburg

PINELLAS · OLD NORTHEAST, WOODLAWN, EUCLID–ST. PAUL, HISTORIC KENWOOD

Quintessential coastal charm without giving up big-city economics.

MEDIAN, LAST 12 MO.	AVERAGE SALE	AVERAGE SIZE
$880,000	**~$1.1 million**	**~1,760 sq ft**

WHY IT WORKS

- Florida has no shortage of beach towns — Venice, Englewood, Vero, Melbourne, the Panhandle. Few carry a family through a full life cycle. This one has a metro attached to it.
- Classic 1950s bungalows, front-porch living, real walkability, a very tight community. Downtown St. Pete is play-first and work-second, with the pier and a lot of open space.
- Bay side, not Gulf side: roughly 20 to 25 minutes across the bridges to Tampa jobs, about 2 miles to downtown St. Pete, and 8 miles to St. Pete Beach.

ADAM'S TAKE

People are Tampa people or they are St. Pete people — almost every time it is binary. But a St. Pete person can absolutely work in Tampa. Nobody moves here for the biggest, newest house; the price per square foot tells that story by itself. They buy charm, walkability and a balanced life. I lived this exact life for five years, before kids, and it fit that season perfectly.

Best fit if: You do not want the suburbs, you value restored and historic over new, and one spouse can carry the commute.

05 Parrish

MANATEE COUNTY · ~40 MILES SOUTH OF DOWNTOWN TAMPA

Wesley Chapel's playbook, run again with fifteen years of notes.

MEDIAN, LAST 12 MO.	VS. LAKEWOOD RANCH	TO TAMPA INTL.
$392,000	**~$250K less**	**~45 minutes**

WHY IT WORKS

- Lakewood Ranch went from farmland to the top-selling multigenerational master plan in the country. Builders are running version two just north of it, because that is where the land still is.
- North River Ranch by Neal, plus Del Webb and Cresswind by Kolter: schools built into the neighborhoods, their own commercial districts, freshwater lagoons. A city within a city.
- Tampa pushes southeast — Riverview, Apollo Beach, Ruskin, Sun City Center — while Sarasota pushes north. Parrish is where those lines meet, and the Fort Hammer Bridge opened up access. Two airports inside sixty miles.

ADAM'S TAKE

Same builder, same floor plan, roughly $250,000 less, ten more miles. That is the trade. You are not moving way out to the country — you are sacrificing fifteen miles so everything else in your life improves: 3,000 square feet instead of 2,000, the pool you could not otherwise get. A lot of people call the distance a negative. If it is not one for you, you get paid for it.

Best fit if: You do not commute daily, you want new construction with appreciation runway, and weekend trips to Tampa's arenas or the airport are enough. Strong for active-adult buyers too.

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KEEP GOING

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Thank you for spending any of your valuable time on my content. — Adam

See you in the next one.

All figures are trailing 12-month medians and averages for the areas noted as of August 2026; they are approximate and will move with the market. Community, builder and commute details are current to the date of the video. This guide is general information for relocation research only — not an appraisal, a guarantee of value, or personalized financial or legal advice.