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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New state-of-the-art warehouse will support Treasure Coast Food Bank's growth



Rendering of the planned Treasure Coast Food Bank's 113,000-square-foot warehouse and distribution facility

Fort Pierce, FL/Nov. 9, 2023 – Treasure Coast Food Bank is another step closer to breaking ground on a state-of-the-art 113,000-square-foot warehouse and distribution facility at the Orange 95 Commerce Center in Fort Pierce. The new facility will enable the regional nonprofit to consolidate its multiple properties and grow its operating capacity.

Treasure Coast Food Bank – the largest hunger relief organization on the Treasure Coast – has provided 107 million meals since 2020 in St. Lucie, Indian River, Martin and Okeechobee counties. In addition to providing food assistance, the Food Bank offers a pet pantry, diaper pantry, connects clients to other community resources, provides job training, operates a food production kitchen and helps provide disaster relief.

Recently approved for low-interest, long-term industrial development bond (IDB) financing, the \$30 million investment in the new facility and equipment will enable the organization to add 53 new

employees over a three-year period. The building will include cold storage, a full kitchen and serve as a FEMA-approved shelter-in-place location.

On Nov. 7, the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners approved a Job Growth Investment Grant for the Food Bank in the amount of \$19,875 per year for five years. This performance-based grant requires the addition of a total of 53 new jobs averaging 107% of the county's 2023 average wage during the first three years of the new facility's operation.

"For many years now the Treasure Coast Food Bank has been an excellent community partner," said St. Lucie County Commission Chair Cathy Townsend. "During the pandemic, the Food Bank staff worked with St. Lucie County to provide mobile food drops at our fairgrounds, Fenn Center and Clover Park. Additionally, the county was able to provide temporary space inside the Sunshine Kitchen during the pandemic so the Food Bank could continue to serve the community when the need was extremely high. I'm thrilled that the Board of County Commissioners was able to offer the Food Bank a Job Growth Incentive Grant to help the non-profit expand its operations and hire more than 50 new employees with a minimum salary of \$23.56 an hour, which is well above the current average wage, so the organization can continue to distribute millions of pounds of food annually to those in need in our community."

"Treasure Coast Food Bank is so pleased to have the support of the St. Lucie County Board of County Commissioners for our new distribution center," said Judy Cruz, president and CEO of the Food Bank. "By providing this funding for increased employment opportunities, the county is investing in local job growth and the expansion of essential services to the Treasure Coast community."

Currently, the Food Bank operates its programs out of five separate locations. Consolidating operations in a modern mission-designed facility will enable the nonprofit to increase its direct services, nutrition programs and job training as well as create additional partnership and volunteer opportunities, said Chief Development Officer Jessica Gosa.

"We are extremely grateful to receive this critical funding from the St. Lucie County Job Growth Initiative Grant to support the 53 additional employment opportunities that will be created by our new 113,000-square-foot distribution center," said Treasure Coast Food Bank Board Chair Mitch Hall. "We currently

assist 250,000 people on the Treasure Coast each week, this facility will make accomplishing that important mission more efficient and allow us to continue to grow our services.”

The Food Bank’s warehouse is the first facility to be announced at the Tambone Companies’ Orange 95 Commerce Center. Tambone Companies professionals, along with the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County, assisted the Food Bank in obtaining the project’s IBD bond financing.

“It’s amazing what the Treasure Coast Food Bank does every day,” said Richard Tambone, president of Tambone Companies and a Food Bank board member. “I’m grateful to be able to play a part in the creation of something that will be such a great asset for our community.” Tambone Companies will coordinate development management during the permitting and construction of the facility on 14.8 acres at the commerce center.

“This is an exciting project for many reasons,” said Pete Tesch, president of the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County. “While a \$30 million capital investment in our county and the addition of 53 good jobs are worth celebrating on their own, this particular investment will pay dividends to the very people in our Treasure Coast communities who need it most. With the additional space and consolidation of operations, the Food Bank will be able to offer even more comprehensive programming. The shelter-in-place designation will make a big difference in the ability of Food Bank personnel to quickly mobilize after a hurricane or other disaster.” Tesch also serves as the vice chair of the nonprofit’s board of directors.

The construction of the warehouse is anticipated to have a one-time positive economic impact of \$32.2 million during the construction phase and a \$12 million annually recurring positive impact based on 53 direct new jobs, 19.5 indirect jobs and 11.5 induced jobs.

About Treasure Coast Food Bank

Founded in 1988, Treasure Coast Food Bank works to solve hunger by providing direct food service programs, running innovative grassroots initiatives, educating the public about the struggles people face in the region’s communities, and advocating on behalf of those in need. In partnership with farmers, manufacturers, retail stores, and nearly 300 schools and partner agencies, Treasure Coast Food Bank serves as a bridge between food sources and individuals who are struggling to put food on the table and provides more than 20 programs and initiatives to feed, lead and strengthen the individuals served by the nonprofit. For more information, visit www.stophunger.org.

About the Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County

The Economic Development Council of St. Lucie County (EDC) is a private, not-for-profit organization dedicated to promoting economic vitality in St. Lucie County through the attraction, retention and expansion of businesses in the community. The EDC works in partnership with local governments and the private sector to advance its goals of creating more and better-paying jobs for residents, broadening the tax base and improving St. Lucie County's economic quality of life. Contact the EDC at 772.336.6250, contact@youredc.com or www.youredc.com.