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Eola Capital buys office building in Tampa's Westshore district

Tampa Bay Business Journal - by [Janet Leiser](#) Staff Writer

For the first time since the September meltdown of the capital markets, a Westshore office building traded hands.

On Thursday, **Eola Capital LLC** bought the 10-story building at 500 N. Westshore Blvd., Tampa, near the entrance to the Westshore Plaza shopping mall, said Kyle Burd, regional vice president of the Orlando-based real estate investment firm.

Eola Capital, which now owns 1.6 million square feet in the Tampa Bay area, declined to say how much it paid for the building and at the request of the seller declined to identify the company. Hillsborough County property records show Eola Capital paid \$17.15 million and obtained a \$20.1 million mortgage from **M&I Bank**.

Hillsborough property records show **Principal Mutual Life Insurance Co.** previously owned the 130,000-square-foot, Class A building. The company paid \$16 million for it in 1998.

Word in the brokerage community is that Principal Insurance had been trying to sell the building for more than six months, but buyer after buyer was unable to obtain financing due to the credit crunch.



500 N. Westshore Blvd.

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“Westshore 500 is in a strategic location at Westshore and Interstate 275. Acquiring it at a substantial discount to replacement cost was a key driver in our investment decision,” Jim Heistand, founder and CEO of Eola Capital, said in a release. “We see great potential for this asset and believe, with the appropriate capital improvements, the building will be well positioned to serve our tenants going forward.”

The building has an occupancy rate of 90 percent and a diverse rent roll comprised of smaller companies providing a stable rent stream for our investors, Burd said.

The sale was brokered by a **CB Richard Ellis** marketing team led by Christian Lee, along with Tampa investment sales veterans Dale Peterson and Ginger Gelsheimer.

The building was constructed in 1984. Eola Capital plans to invest in substantial capital improvements to the property.

In April 2008, Eola Capital paid \$19.25 million, or \$112.50 a square foot, for Buschwood I and II in Carrollwood. It already owned Buschwood III.

In addition to Tampa and Orlando, Eola Capital has offices in Florida in Fort Lauderdale, Jacksonville, Panama City and Tallahassee. It also has offices in Richmond, W.Va.; Atlanta; Charlotte, N.C.; and Columbia, S.C.