

December 16, 2024

FORT BEND COUNTY TOLL ROAD AUTHORITY


Resolution for Agenda Item 4.b.

RE: Resolution approving recommended changes to Non-Revenue and Discount Usage Policy and request to submit recommended changes to Commissioners Court for further action

The Board of Directors of the Fort Bend County Toll Road Authority (the "Authority") hereby approves additional changes to the Non-Revenue and Discount Usage Policy, including certain changes as requested by the Office of the Attorney General of the State of Texas, all as shown in Exhibit A attached hereto, and recommends that the Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County, Texas, take appropriate action to approve such changes and incorporate them into the Non-Revenue and Discount Usage Policy for the Authority's toll roads.

The Board further directs legal counsel to the Authority to submit this Resolution, together with the Amended and Restated Non-Revenue and Discount Usage Policy attached as Exhibit B, to Commissioners Court with a recommendation from the Board for Commissioners Court to take further action approving the recommended changes.

APPROVED


Chairman

ATTESTED:


Secretary

Exhibit A

Additional Changes to Non-Revenue and Discount Usage Policy

(Attached)

FORT BEND COUNTY TOLL ROADS
AMENDED AND RESTATED NON-REVENUE AND DISCOUNT USAGE POLICY

Definitions. As used in this policy, the following terms shall be understood to have these meanings:

“Fort Bend County” means Fort Bend County, Texas and the Fort Bend County Flood Control District.

“FBCTRA” or the “Authority” means the Fort Bend County Toll Road Authority.

“Toll Roads” means any or all of the roads made part of the Fort Bend County Toll Road system.

“Bond Indentures” means the various covenants and indentures contained within the revenue bonds that finance construction of the Toll Roads.

Section 1. Declaration of Policy. Pursuant to Texas Transportation Code §284.003, Fort Bend County is vested with authority, without state approval, supervision, or regulation, to impose tolls or charges for the Toll Roads, except as otherwise provided by applicable law. In order to comply with applicable statutes of the State of Texas, the Texas Constitution, and the Bond Indentures, Fort Bend County declares that there shall be no free service granted to vehicles using the Toll Roads, except as provided herein or as required by applicable law (acknowledging that the Texas Constitution may limit or delay the implementation of applicable law). Fort Bend County shall update this policy as may be required by applicable laws of the State of Texas, subject to the provisions of the Texas Constitution, including the limitations and protections contained therein.

Section 2. Findings. It is hereby found, determined, and declared that allowing free passage to the vehicles described in Section 3 below is in conformity with applicable laws of the State of Texas (including but not limited to the Texas Transportation Code, as amended) and the Texas Constitution and, therefore, is in the public interest and in the interest of the Toll Roads; will facilitate public safety and mobility; develop public and governmental awareness, support and acceptance of the Toll Roads; and promote enhanced use and increase total revenue collections.

Section 3. Categories of Free Passage on Toll Roads.

Section 3.1 Vehicles. The following vehicles are permitted free passage on the toll roads, provided the vehicle has an electronic toll tag linked to a vehicle and account meeting one of the qualifications below (along with any other vehicle that FBCTRA is prohibited from collecting a toll under applicable law). To the extent permitted by applicable law, the Authority may require an additional registration (“opt-in”) to ensure all qualifying vehicles are not charged tolls. These requirements are necessary to allow the Authority to provide free passage in the most cost-effective manner. The Authority may, at its discretion, assist users in obtaining an electronic toll tag at a discount when in the opinion of the Authority the cost of the electronic toll tag is less than the cost to administer the free passage for a class or fleet of vehicles without an electronic toll tag.

1. Marked police vehicles, fire department vehicles, and ambulances are permitted free passage.
2. Authorized emergency vehicles identified in Texas Transportation Code §541.201 (as amended from time to time by the Texas Legislature) are permitted free passage.

3. Vehicles designated by the Department of Public Safety as emergency vehicles during disasters declared by the governor of Texas are permitted free passage on the Toll Roads (Texas Transportation Code §546.006).
4. Convoys of military vehicles of the State of Texas, another state, or the United States are permitted free passage. Individual military vehicles, including unmarked military vehicles operated by military personnel conducting an emergency preparedness, response, or recovery operation or participating in a training exercise for an emergency preparedness, response, or recovery operation, are permitted free passage to the greatest extent practicable, considering the technological and personnel limitations of operating the toll project (Texas Transportation Code §362.901). The preceding sentence does not include military vehicles operated for personal use.
5. Fort Bend County owned/leased vehicles are permitted free passage on the toll road system while used in the performance of County business. With the exception of authorized emergency vehicles covered in Section 3.1.2, a Fort Bend County employee who is assigned a County vehicle and authorized to take the vehicle home will be required to reimburse FBCTRA for tolls incurred when not doing County business. The reimbursement to FBCTRA should include all commuting and any de minimis personal usage throughout the day. Qualifying vehicles under this section must be equipped with a HCTRA EZ-Tag on an active EZ-Tag account maintained by the County. EZ-Tags for qualifying vehicles must be approved and authorized by a County department head.
6. Vehicles with qualifying Texas license plates for Disabled Veterans, Purple Heart recipients, and Legion of Valor recipients are permitted free passage through electronic tolling lanes if the vehicle has an electronic toll tag linked to the qualifying license plate (Texas Transportation Code §372.053 and §504.315 (f) and (g)) and the vehicles are registered with the Authority. A qualifying veteran may register up to 2 vehicles to receive free passage through electronic tolling lanes. The Authority may, at its discretion, permit registration of a third vehicle, upon the qualifying veteran's demonstration that a hardship would occur without registration of such third vehicle for free passage. A qualifying veteran with 3 vehicles registered for free passage on the date this policy is adopted shall be permitted to maintain its free passage status for those 3 vehicles without having to show hardship, for so long as the qualifying veteran is the owner of each of those previously-registered vehicles.
7. Metropolitan Transit Authority of Harris County, Houston, Texas ("METRO") public transit vehicles actually engaged in service are permitted free passage on the toll road system. Qualifying vehicles under this section must be equipped with a HCTRA EZ-Tag on an active EZ-Tag account maintained by METRO. EZ-Tags for qualifying vehicles must be approved and authorized by a METRO department head. For ease of administration, all buses and vans will be assumed to be "actually engaged in service." It will be assumed that all other METRO vehicles are not "actually engaged in service." METRO may submit documentation to demonstrate that any such vehicle is "actually engaged in service."
8. School Buses of the school districts of the State of Texas actually engaged in service are permitted free passage on the FBCTRA toll road system. For ease of administration, all school buses and school vans will be assumed to be "actually engaged in service." Qualifying vehicles under this section must be equipped with a HCTRA EZ-Tag on an

active EZ-Tag account maintained by the school district. EZ-Tags for qualifying vehicles must be approved and authorized by a school district department head.

9. Harris County owned/leased vehicles are permitted free passage on the FBCTRA toll road system while used in the performance of business related to the FBCTRA system. With the exception of authorized emergency vehicles covered in Section 3.1.2, a Harris County employee who is assigned a County vehicle and authorized to take the vehicle home will be required to reimburse FBCTRA for toll incurred when not doing business related to FBCTRA system. The reimbursement to FBCTRA should include all commuting and any de minimis personal usage throughout the day.

Section 3.2. Vehicles Used By Non-Profit Disaster Relief Organizations. In accordance with Texas Transportation Code § 372.052, vehicles used by non-profit disaster relief organizations that are registered under Texas Transportation Code §502.454, are not required to pay a toll for the use of the Toll Roads. Section 502.454 provides that the owner of a commercial motor vehicle, trailer, or semitrailer may apply for registration under Texas Transportation Code §502.451, and is exempt from the payment of the registration fee that would otherwise be required by Chapter 502, Texas Transportation Code, if the vehicle is: (1) owned by a nonprofit disaster relief organization; and (2) used by the organization exclusively for emergencies, training, equipment maintenance, transportation of disaster relief supplies, or other activities related to disaster relief.

Section 3.3. Circumstances. It is the intent of this policy to authorize personnel to react quickly to emergencies and events that endanger public safety and/or jeopardize human life while staying within the guidelines provided by applicable bond indentures. Where sufficient notice of an impending catastrophic event allows a reasonable opportunity for Commissioners Court to convene and act, authority to permit free passage on the Toll Roads must be obtained from Commissioners Court. When the emergency or event is unexpected or unforeseen, this policy strives to delegate authority to persons in the best position to exercise informed judgment in a manner that is timely and appropriate to the situation that exists.

The County Judge is authorized to permit free passage on part or all of the Toll Roads when a large- scale emergency or calamity (natural or man-made) threatens public safety and necessitates the immediate evacuation or relocation of large numbers of people that may obstruct or impede rapid movement on the Toll Roads.

In the event of a localized emergency or condition (such as refinery explosions, gas leaks, hazardous material spills, flooding, traffic accidents, lane closures, etc.) that substantially threatens public safety and mobility, an on-site Incident Management certified peace officer may permit limited free passage for a period of no more than one hour. Approval of the County Judge, Fort Bend County Engineer, or the Director of FBCTRA must be obtained to extend free passage beyond the initial one-hour period. FBCTRA will notify TranStar of localized emergencies and provide the coordination the circumstances require.

Lane and road closures required for construction and maintenance of the Toll Roads should be planned and coordinated so as to have the least impact on traffic flow. Where such closures are expected to substantially and adversely affect traffic flow and/or threaten public safety, free passage may be permitted by the Director of FBCTRA, the Fort Bend County Engineer or their designee.

When opening a new road project or segment, FBCTRA's Director may designate a time period where free passage may be permitted to allow for testing of the infrastructure supporting the toll collection process. If the test period needs to exceed 45 days, FBCTRA's Director should obtain authorization from Commissioners Court to extend the test period.

Section 4. Contractors. Contractors will not be permitted free passage unless specifically provided for through the contracting process.

Section 5. Privately Owned Vehicles. Unless specifically addressed in Section 3 of this policy, privately owned vehicles will not be permitted free passage without specific approval from Commissioners Court.

A non-accountable car allowance is paid in lieu of reimbursement for mileage, parking, tolls, or other auto related expenditures incurred within the Fort Bend County limits. Individuals who receive non-accountable car allowances are not permitted free passage, with the exception of law enforcement personnel covered under Section 3.1.1.

Section 6. Items Not Addressed. Any free vehicular passage and/or temporary closure of the Toll Roads that has not been addressed through this policy must be approved and authorized by Commissioners Court on a case-by-case basis.

Section 7. Ratification of Prior Actions. All prior actions, policies, and determinations with respect to permitting vehicles to use the Toll Roads without paying tolls are hereby ratified and affirmed and determined to have been in the public interest or the interest of the Toll Roads during the period they were in effect within the meaning of the Bond Indentures.

Section 8. Conformity with Bond Indentures. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, it is the intention of the Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County to provide for the collection of tolls from vehicles using the Toll Roads in conformity with the requirements of the Bond Indentures. The County expressly reserves the right to take such further actions as shall be required by, permitted under or consistent with the terms of such Bond Indentures, including, without limitation, providing for the use of commutation or other tickets or privileges based upon frequency or volume or other method which the Traffic Engineers (as defined in the Bond Indentures) may recommend will produce the maximum amount of net revenues to the Toll Roads and/or take such actions with respect to the collection of tolls as may be recommended by the Traffic Engineers consistent with the terms of the Bond Indentures.

Section 9. Effective Date. This policy shall take effect from and after its approval by Commissioners Court on or about January 14, 2025 and shall be implemented as soon as practical thereafter.

Exhibit B

County Order with Amended and Restated Non-Revenue and Discount Policy

(Attached)

THE STATE OF TEXAS §
 §
COUNTY OF FORT BEND §

The Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County, Texas, (“Commissioners Court”) convened in REGULAR SESSION AT A REGULAR TERM OF SAID COURT, open to the public, on the _____ day of _____, 2024, at the County Courthouse, with a quorum of said Court present:

Whereupon, among other business the following was transacted at said meeting: a written order entitled:

ORDER ADOPTING AMENDED AND RESTATED NON-REVENUE AND DISCOUNT USAGE POLICY FOR FORT BEND COUNTY TOLL TOADS

(the “Order”) was duly introduced for the consideration of the Commissioners Court and reviewed in full. It was then duly moved by _____ and seconded by _____ that the Order be passed; and, after due discussion, the motion, carrying with it the passage of the Order, prevailed and carried by the following vote:

AYES: _____
NOES: _____
ABSENT: _____

The County Judge thereupon announced that the Order has been duly and lawfully adopted. The Order thus adopted follows:

THE STATE OF TEXAS §
 §
COUNTY OF FORT BEND §

ORDER ADOPTING AMENDED AND RESTATED NON-REVENUE AND
DISCOUNT USAGE POLICY FOR FORT BEND COUNTY TOLL TOADS

RECITALS

WHEREAS, the Fort Bend County Toll Road Authority (“Authority”) is operating the Fort Bend Parkway and the Fort Bend Westpark Tollway (the “Toll Roads”) on behalf of Fort Bend County (the “County”); and

WHEREAS, the County adopted an Amended and Restated Non-Revenue and Discount Usage Policy on July 23, 2019, as amended by the Authority on November 18, 2024 (the “Policy”); and

WHEREAS, on December 16, 2024, following discussions with the Office of Attorney General of the State of Texas, the Authority adopted a resolution approving additional changes to the Policy (the “Updated Policy”) and has recommended that Commissioners Court of the County approve the Updated Policy, as provided herein;

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED BY THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS THAT:

SECTION 1. The recitals set forth in this order are true and correct.

SECTION 2. The Commissioners Court hereby finds and declares that granting free passage to the stated category of vehicles specified in the Updated Policy is in the public interest.

SECTION 3. The Updated Policy attached as Exhibit “A” is hereby approved and adopted.

PASSED AND APPROVED this ____ day of _____, 2025.

FORT BEND COUNTY

K.P George, County Judge

ATTEST:

Laura Richard, County Clerk
Clerk of the Commissioners Court of
Fort Bend County, Texas

Exhibit “A”

FORT BEND COUNTY TOLL ROADS
AMENDED AND RESTATED NON-REVENUE AND DISCOUNT USAGE POLICY

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Section 2. Findings. It is hereby found, determined, and declared that allowing free passage to the vehicles described in Section 3 below is in conformity with applicable laws of the State of Texas (including but not limited to the Texas Transportation Code, as amended) and the Texas Constitution and, therefore, is in the public interest and in the interest of the Toll Roads; will facilitate public safety and mobility; develop public and governmental awareness, support and acceptance of the Toll Roads; and promote enhanced use and increase total revenue collections.

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Section 8. Conformity with Bond Indentures. Notwithstanding anything contained herein to the contrary, it is the intention of the Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County to provide for the collection of tolls from vehicles using the Toll Roads in conformity with the requirements of the Bond Indentures. The County expressly reserves the right to take such further actions as shall be required by, permitted under or consistent with the terms of such Bond Indentures, including, without limitation, providing for the use of commutation or other tickets or privileges based upon frequency or volume or other method which the Traffic Engineers (as defined in the Bond Indentures) may recommend will produce the maximum amount of net revenues to the Toll Roads and/or take such actions with respect to the collection of tolls as may be recommended by the Traffic Engineers consistent with the terms of the Bond Indentures.

Section 9. Effective Date. This policy shall take effect from and after its approval by Commissioners Court on or about January 14, 2025 and shall be implemented as soon as practical thereafter.

CERTIFICATE FOR ORDER

THE STATE OF TEXAS §
 §
COUNTY OF FORT BEND §

We, the undersigned officers of the Commissioners Court (“Court”) of Fort Bend County, Texas (“County”), do hereby certify as follows:

1. That we are the duly chosen, qualified and acting officers of the Court for the offices shown below our signatures and that as such we are familiar with the facts herein certified.
2. That there is attached to and follows this certificate an excerpt of proceedings from the minutes of a meeting of the Court which is a true, full and complete excerpt of all proceedings from the minutes of the Court pertaining to the adoption of the Order described therein; and that the persons named in such excerpt as the officers and members of the Court or as officers of the County are the duly chosen, qualified and acting officers and members as indicated therein.
3. That a true and complete copy of the Order (“Order”), as adopted at the meeting described in such excerpt from the minutes, is attached to and follows such excerpt.
4. That the Order has been duly and lawfully adopted by the Court and that the County Judge of the County has approved, and hereby approves, the Order; that the County Judge and the County Clerk of the County have duly signed and attested the Order and each, respectively, hereby declares that the signing of this certificate shall also constitute the signing of the Order for all purposes; and that the Order, as signed, has been duly recorded in the minutes of the Court for such meeting.
5. That each of the officers and members of the Court was duly and sufficiently notified officially and personally, in advance, of the date, hour, place and subject of such meeting of the Court, and that the Order would be introduced and considered for passage at such meeting, and each of such officers and members consented, in advance, to the holding of such meeting to consider and act upon such subject.
6. That written notice of the date, hour, place and subject of the meeting of the Court described in the excerpt from the minutes was posted on a bulletin board located at a place convenient to the public in the County Courthouse of the County; and that such meeting was open to the public as required by law at all times during which the Order and the subject matter thereof were discussed, considered and formally acted upon, all as required by the Open Meetings Act, Chapter 551, Texas Governmental Code, as amended.

SIGNED AND SEALED the ____ day of _____, 2025

Laura Richard, County Clerk
Clerk of the Commissioners Court of
Fort Bend County, Texas

K.P George, County Judge

THE STATE OF TEXAS §
 §
COUNTY OF FORT BEND §

I, the undersigned, County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk of the Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County, Texas, do hereby certify that the above and foregoing is a true and correct copy of an Order of the Commissioners Court which was passed and adopted on the ____ day of _____, 2024, together with a copy of so much of the minutes as show the canvassing of the Court, the names of the members present and absent and the passage and adoption of such Order, all as same appears of record in the minutes of said Court and on file in my office.

WITNESS MY HAND AND THE SEAL OF THE COMMISSIONERS COURT OF FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS, this ____ day of _____, 2025.

LAURA RICHARD
County Clerk and Ex-Officio Clerk of the
Commissioners Court of Fort Bend County,
Texas

By:_____